

GROWING A SOUL



MATTHEW T. ANDREWS

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GROWING A SOUL

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By MATTHEW T. ANDREWS, D. D.

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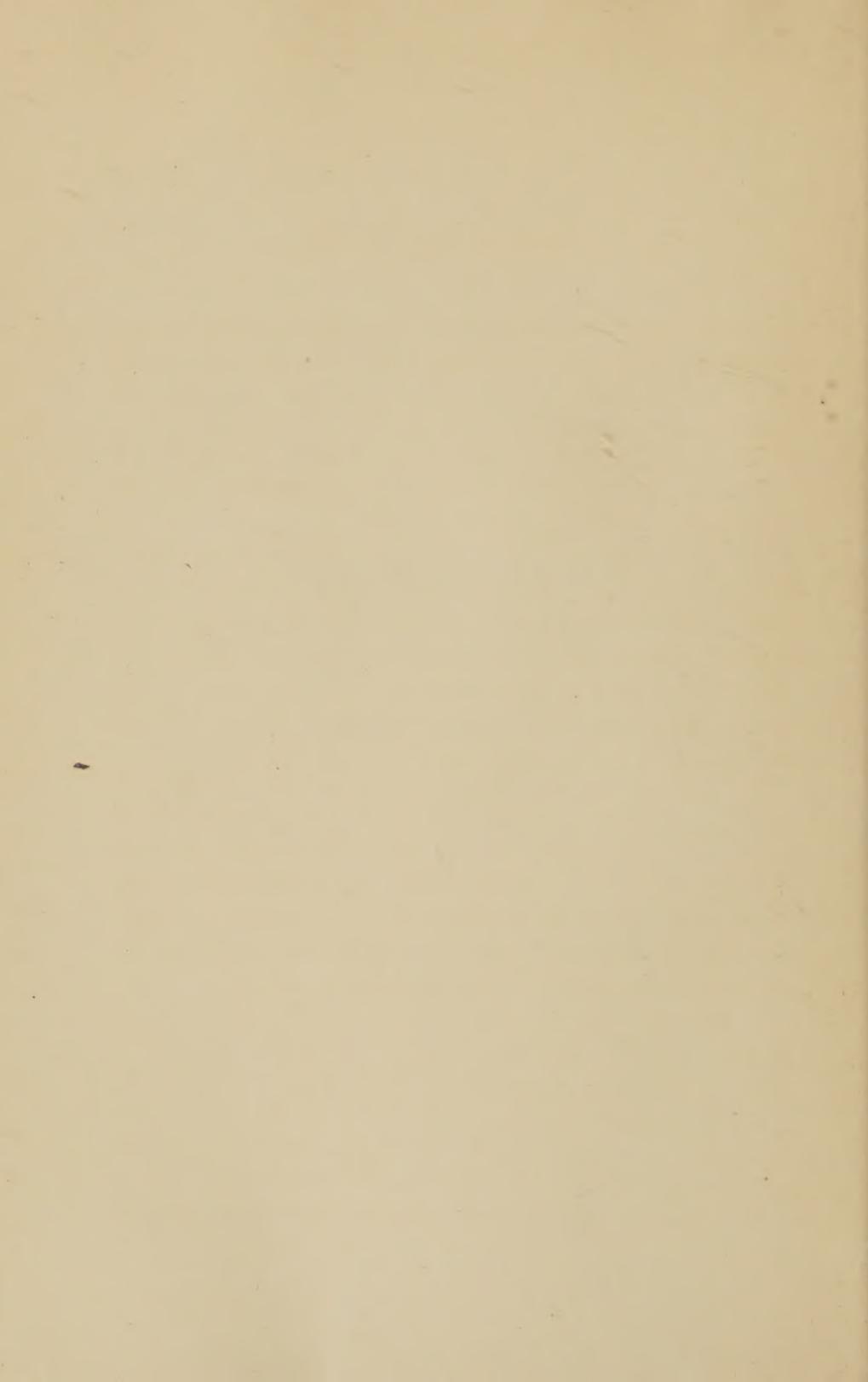
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TO
THE LITTLE WOMAN

WHO HAS KEPT INVOLUTE HER VOWS
TO HELP ME SUCCEED IN MY MINISTRY
THIS VOLUME
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED



INTRODUCTION

THE preaching of the gospel is probably the most potent factor in human society, aside from the immediate hand of God. The voice of the preacher is heard around the world in every circle of uplifting life. The proclamation of the Good News by faithful preachers is the mightiest human power aided by divine strength against sin, for righteousness and world betterment.

The preacher is God's key-man in the saving agencies of this world. He is needed today as never before. His office rightly filled outrules kings and outwars armies. The force or program that corners or belittles gospel preaching is the enemy of God and man. Any power that furthers good preaching is God's agency for bringing in the universal rule of righteousness.

The pulpit and the printing-press are the preacher's rightful thrones. He should speak with clarion voice, and send wide and far on the wings of the printed page the gospel message. This is the age of rapid reading. More people are reading today than ever before. Preachers should use the printer's ink more in books, in magazines, in daily and weekly papers, in tracts.

I welcome this volume by Dr. M. T. Andrews, of Texas. He is a stalwart man, true, loyal, successful, virile, every inch consecrated to the main matters. He is a preacher with a brain and a heart. He is a pastor with the soul of a shepherd. He is an evangelist winning men week by week in his own and in other fields.

His sermons in this volume bristle with truth, pulsate

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with love, breathe with power, and in them all is the compassionate note—he loves lost men. He sounds no uncertain, no unsound notes. He speaks the truth in love. He exalts his Master. He seeks to win men, and winning them, sends them out and on to win others. This volume of sermons will bless where it goes. It ought to go far.

L. R. SCARBOROUGH.

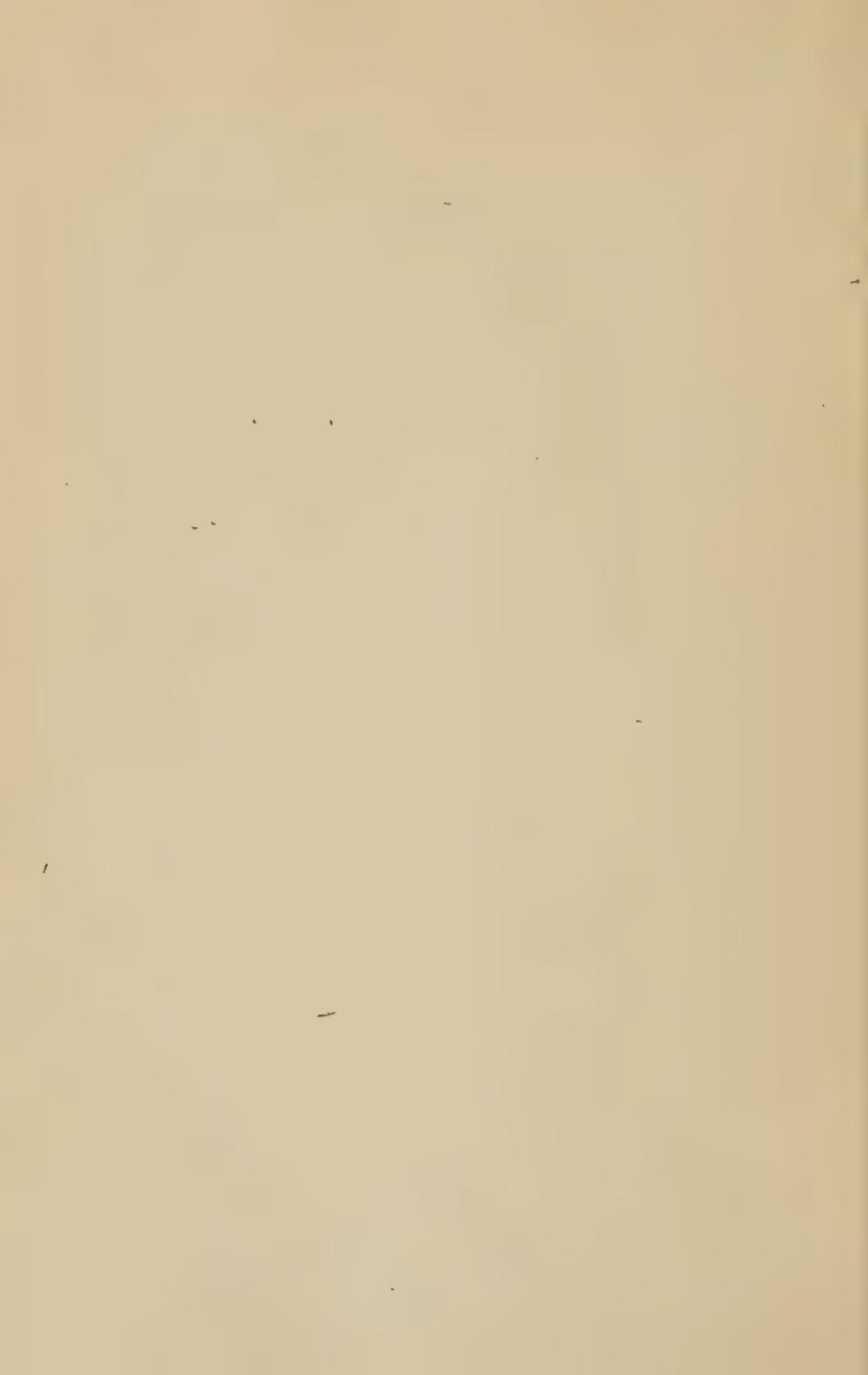
FORT WORTH, TEXAS.

FOREWORD

THE sermons and addresses contained in this volume have been delivered in the course of the author's work as a pastor, some of them in revival meetings and some on special occasions. He has not been importuned to publish them, though some brethren have suggested such a thing, and others when it was mentioned have commended it.

The sermons have been delivered for the most part from notes, and then written out after they were delivered. As far as possible the extemporaneous style of delivery has been preserved in writing. It was desired that they appear just as they were spoken, or had been stenographically reported, literary construction being a secondary matter.

M. T. A.



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I

GROWING A SOUL¹

It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him.—1 John 3 : 2.

There can be no organic life in nature without growth. The giant oak that today braves the storms of winter and furnishes shelter from the heat of summer, is the tiny acorn of yesterday. The mighty warrior who today thunders his commands and rules the thousands at his will, is the helpless babe of yesterday. The secret of the marvelous transformation of the tiny acorn and the helpless babe is growth. The sublime possibilities of manhood and womanhood under the guiding hand of destiny constitute our pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night.

But the most interesting thing in all the realm of growth is the growth of a soul. There is more to discover in the growth of the best there is in man than in any field of material advancement. In fact, some of the best thinkers of our age are saying, that the largest future development for mankind lies in the realm of religion.

The physical and material progress of man, whatever that is, they say, is about finished. For man's body they are not making a better hand, or a better foot, or a better ear, or a better eye. The human body is no more perfect now than it was six thousand years ago.

¹ Baccalaureate Sermon before Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

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It is doubtful also if science is making any improvement in man's brain. The really great and original thinkers of the race are not all modern products by any means. It does seem that if there is to be any further marked development in the race, it must be in the realm of the soul.

The growth of the soul depends upon four things which I wish to point out and emphasize today: First, moral intelligence; second, a worthy ambition; third, a dauntless will; and fourth, a divine force.

I

Moral Intelligence

Real thinking on the serious business of living is essential to the growth of a soul. Is it not strange that in a world where so much thinking is done, and where so many monuments have been erected to the triumphs of reason, so little thought is given to that which is of supreme moment—life itself?

Every locomotive that leaves the station must have an engineer; intelligence must be in command. Every ship that clears the port and sails the high seas must have a captain; reason must rule. In all the professions the cry is for more light and larger-minded men. No one expects success anywhere in the business world except in proportion as he puts his mind upon his task.

Our science, our art, our philosophy, our political and industrial institutions, our history, our entire civilization are monuments to the greatness and the triumphs of the human mind. We behold everywhere the marvels achieved by thought; everywhere thought is doing won-

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ders and performing miracles—except in the growth of character. Character, the supreme thing in life, is abandoned to chance. Life is left to make a way for itself unshielded in the field of battle.

A father went out into his yard one day and found his little two-year-old child stroking the back of an immense rattlesnake. Was that safe for that child? You might as well expect a child to play in safety with a serpent as to hope that a young man can keep his honor, maintain his purity, and hold fast his integrity in the midst of all the peril of this world, without the application of moral intelligence to the serious business of living. Poor Robert Burns, in his poem, “A Bard’s Epitaph,” says:

Is there a man whose judgment clear,
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs himself life’s mad career
 Wild as the wave?
Here pause—and through the starting tear,
 Survey this grave.
This poor inhabitant below,
Was quick to learn and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
 And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low—
 And stained his name.

The fundamental sin of this world is the failure to put one’s life under the power of moral intelligence. I do verily believe that at the heart of the overwhelming majority of the blasted hopes and blighted careers which mark the generation in which we live, is the refusal to think, leaving life and the making of character to chance.

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II

A Worthy Ambition

What is a worthy ambition, a legitimate purpose for a human life? What is the primary and supreme goal for a growing soul? I do not hesitate to answer. The worthiest ambition and the holiest purpose for a human life is the moral perfection of character. "This one thing I do," was the cry of the great-hearted Paul. All through the years he sought one goal—the moral perfection of character. "I have not yet attained," he said, "neither am I already perfect, but I mean to be some day; and every resource I have, human and divine, is consecrated to this worthy end."

I speak in all seriousness when I say that everything else in this world is secondary as compared with this. And when we live without this, we are chasing butterflies or following a will-o'-the-wisp into the damp and dark and disease of the night in the swamp. Satisfaction with past attainments is unrighteous and unworthy of us. The holiest ambition for a growing soul is the perfection of character.

When Thorwaldsen had finished a statue that satisfied him, in deepest sorrow he discovered that his genius had departed from him. His great intellect saw that failure began at the point beyond which one could push no farther. That statue was his best, but it was also his last of any real value.

General Gordon, England's great soldier, sat in his tent reading "The Imitation of Christ," written by Thomas à Kempis. That book illustrates the persistency of self-discipline and the possibility of one's becoming

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more and more like Christ. General Gordon read, and then wrote down in his note-book these words:

This is my book, and, although I never shall be able to attain to the one-hundredth part of the perfection of that soul, I strive toward it; my ideal is here.

My young friends, I would not mislead you. It is hardly probable that you will ever completely attain this goal of perfection. It is not the dream of a moment. It lies beyond the range of human endeavor. Its achievement is as long as eternity and as expansive as God. But it is possible, and this is the important thing for you, it is possible for one to spend the whole circle of life here on earth under the controlling, and ennobling, and elevating, and sanctifying power of such a sacred ambition.

Some one has said that there are three sovereign, conquering verbs in life, whose conjugation in all the moods and voices and tenses determine destiny.

The first of this trinity of verbs is the verb "to have." The desire to have is inborn. Man is a constitutional seeker after things. A part of his equipment is a pair of hands that are built to grasp and to hold. Now, there is no sin in having. There is no virtue in poverty, and no vice in wealth. He who prefers penury to plenty is a freak and a fanatic. Property means ability. A man of wealth is a man of importance.

But is money the infallible standard of greatness? No! Money may degenerate into a curse unmitigated. It may, and does often, turn loose a brood of demon passions—avarice, greed, covetousness, lust—all of which feed like vultures on the nobler life of a man. A

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miser is the apostasy of wealth. His heart is a fagot in the furnace-fires of torment. He lives in the anteroom of hell. A man does not reach his serenest grandeur in wealth. He is a thing and not a man, who is a mere attachment to a bank account. To be a slave to money-making schemes is to become a money-making machine, and nothing else. There must be something greater and higher for a human being than to have.

The second in the trinity is the verb "to do." It is a more noble verb. Its realm is the kingdom of service. It has to do with solving the problems of life. It lays emphasis on deeds rather than on creeds. The world's hurts are not healed by theories. Passionate tirades, loud talk, and windy publications are not the medicine for human ills. Something needs to be done. Life is not a spectacular display of what one has or knows; life is going about doing good.

The third in the trinity of verbs is the verb "to be." Its realm is not the kingdom of property, or of service, but of character. It is here that God always lays the stress. In the world you may be asked, "What have you? How much do you possess?" In the world you may be asked, "What have you done?" But the God of all the ages asks, "What are you?" The highest command in this world is not "Take heed to thy wealth," or "Take heed to thy deeds," but "Take heed to thyself." It is not meat and drink, but character. What one is dominates what he has, and determines what he does. The only thing in this world that can save riches and deeds from plunging the race into incomparable disaster is character.

The struggle, therefore, to be, the aim at moral per-

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fection, the building of character in oneself, is the master effort of the soul of man. The most subtle temptation of the devil is to lead a man to search for small things, to be guided by low purpose, to spend his strength doing that which ten thousand lesser creatures are capable of doing, and to neglect the grander task, the holiest thing in the plan of the ages.

Cleopatra said to Mark Antony, "It is not for you to be fishing for gudgeon, but to be taking forts, and towns, and citadels." She was right. A king ought not to be building a hut or a hovel, not even a palace. A king ought to be building an empire. A human being, a soul in the image of God, ought not to be dissipating its strength on trifles. A soul ought to hear the challenge of the heights and grow forever. In the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

III

A Dauntless Will

There is abroad in the world a foolish notion, a sort of remnant of the old pagan theology, that life is largely a game of chance. The dignity of human freedom is scoffed at. The votaries of this notion hold that there is a supernatural power which amounts to fatalism that

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forces its way into the environment of one's life, and a mystical despotism determines destiny.

Now, I do not mean to question the effect of environment on a human life. Man is the creature of circumstances; but he is also the creator of circumstances. Napoleon was the creature of circumstances when he found his army cut off by the Alps. But he was the creator of circumstances when like a king he swung his scepter over the circumstances and said, "There shall be no Alps," and when he said that the word "impossible" is a "blockhead" word, and eliminated it from his vocabulary.

The railroad constructor was a creature of circumstances when his engine halted before the mountain-range; but he became the creator of circumstances when he said, "Go on, go on," and bored a hole through the granite hills and sent his train speeding on to belt the commerce of the world.

John Bunyan, cast into Bedford Jail, and John Milton, afflicted with blindness, were creatures of circumstances; but "*Pilgrim's Progress*" and "*Paradise Lost*" declare them both to be creators of circumstances.

Helen Keller, afflicted at two years of age with cerebro-spinal meningitis, leaving her spineless, earless, and eyeless, was a creature of circumstances; but Helen Keller graduated from one of the great universities of the world, entertaining on the platform with the story of her life for \$500 a night, is a creator of circumstances.

Some people are always imprisoned and kept down because they are victims of a vicious superstition that passes for philosophy. Did you ever hear that there is no possible chance for a man who starts on Friday, or

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sleeps in room No. 13? By the way, some one has reminded us how little there is after all in that Friday superstition.

Columbus started on his memorable voyage in search of a new world on Friday. Ten weeks later on Friday he discovered America. The Mayflower landed with the Pilgrims on Friday. George Washington was born on Friday. Bunker Hill was seized and fortified on Friday. Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown on Friday. The motion was made in Congress on Friday that the United States ought to be free and independent. And if you will excuse me, I was born on Friday, and on the thirteenth day of the month.

It is a pagan theology, a heathen philosophy, and an infamous falsehood that a man can be defeated in life by the despotism of circumstances. I will not consent that a man, created in the divine image and allied with the Almighty, can be shut out from his inalienable right by circumstances. There is nothing in environment, in conditions, not even in blood, that can condemn and doom a man.

The outstanding lesson of the parable of the Prodigal Son is the freedom of the human will. The wayward boy was not compelled to abide in the father's house. God has dowered the human will with the right of choice, and it was foreordained that when a human being faces a moral issue, his will shall be free.

Heaven is no prison-house where the inmates are kept in by bolts and locks and chains. Heaven is home, where the doors open at the touch of love. Heaven is the unfettered choice of an untrammeled soul. God has made no decree that will destroy the freedom of the will.

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Now, in the building of character, every victory is the forerunner of another struggle. Every battle is a preparation for a harder battle. Character is made by a process of development. The best in a man comes out at great cost. The law of athletics applies in religion and morals. Every Daniel has been in training for a lion's den. Waterloo was won by the old Imperial Guards. Character is no accident. It is not born in a night. Character is the strength that is gained from withstanding the wind and the storm of yesterday.

How does a soul grow? not in a minute;
Now it may lose ground, and now it may win it;
Now it resolves, and again the will faileth;
Now it rejoiceth, and now it bewaileth;
Now its hopes fructify, then they are blighted;
Now it walks suddenly, now gropes benighted;
Fed by discouragements, taught by disaster;
So it goes forward, now slower, now faster;
Till all the pain past, and failure made whole,
It is now full grown, and the Lord rules the soul.

IV

A Divine Force

The secret desire of every worthy human being is for the largest personality and power that is possible. To work out one's full destiny, to have the largest possible influence, to be a great person, is a laudable ambition for every human heart.

Self to completely fulfil,
That's the valid right of man.

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There is something in Christianity—I may not be able to tell you what it is—but there is something in Christianity, in a holy and intimate friendship with Christ, that releases powers in a human being and frees him from moral and spiritual awkwardness.

As Phillips Brooks has said :

There comes a culture out of the religious life. From the silent reading of the Bible, from the heart's meeting with the wonders of the life divine in prayer, there comes a trueness and a fitness, a manliness and a womanliness, that schools and courts can never give.

This divine culture of soul comes, not so much from imitation of Christ, as by the reincarnation of Christ. It is one thing to imitate, and quite another thing to incarnate.

One morning the world saw a green sprig coming from the dull face of a clod under which a tiny seed had been planted. It grew, and grew, and grew, gathering moisture from the air and color from the light, until it burst into a beautiful bloom, distilling sweetness and fragrance everywhere. The tiny seed had unfolded its powers and expressed itself.

Then came the autumn winds and took the color and foliage away from the little shrub, and it fell. But before it fell it had produced at the base of every dead blossom tiny seeds like its own, dowered with the same possibilities and destined to the same ministry of sweetness and cheer.

Something not more mysterious than that happened, and we call it “the incarnation.” One day a Gardener from heaven let a seed of the divine life down into the

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world. In a strange and mysterious way "the word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and the world saw a spark of divinity flash in the face of a human clod. The child grew, and grew, and grew, until his character flowered with the fairest virtues and was fragrant with the sweetest ministries.

Then came the autumn winds, and he who had healed the sick and raised the dead, himself died on a cross and was laid in a tomb. But as he fell, there arose around him those to whom he had imparted his life, and who were destined to perpetuate his ministry of sweetness and cheer.

Regeneration is a reincarnation. It is the great divine Gardener planting the divine seed in the soil of a human soul, and the growth of that soul is the process of unfolding that germ of life until it can be said of him, "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

God's way of making a character is to let Christ down into the human life. Christ pervades that life, changes and charges its motives, its feelings, its aspirations, its sympathies with the electric current of celestial power, until the life is suffused with the glow and glory of the divine presence.

And now, may I say to you, in closing, that this reincarnation of Christ is the only hope for the future, the only answer to the irrepressible question, "What will become of me when I die?" The answer to that question is not so difficult as some have imagined.

What a man is, will determine where he will go. Future punishment is not arbitrary. It is the inevitable result of evil desire and base life. The laws of society

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did not hang Judas Iscariot. Even God would have forgiven his criminality, black and deep-dyed as it was. But Judas could not forgive himself. The pressure of the rope around his neck was the pressure of destiny. He twisted its cords with his own hands, and with them mixed the elements of his own bitterness.

When the Kensington Gardens in London were started some years ago, they sent to China, Africa, India, Oceanica, Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, and elsewhere and gathered specimens of all the beautiful birds of the world to exhibit in those gardens. The birds were collected in cages, and were packed into an immense crate and loaded on the ship at Alexandria.

When the ship was being unloaded in London, by some means the great iron hook with which the crate was lifted, ripped off the top, and the crate crashed down and was shattered into a thousand pieces. These birds of blue, and birds of yellow, birds of every color; birds from China, birds from Africa, birds from Oceanica, Egypt, Arabia, India, Palestine, birds from everywhere—were all set free on the shores of England. In a little while every bird had gone to his own home. Only a lone pelican was left, and he, being crippled, could neither swim nor fly.

These birds in prison were not where they desired to be. They did not want to be exhibited in zoological gardens. It was not their nature; and no cage could change their nature or their desire. As soon as they were released from circumstances over which they had no control, they went every one to his own place.

That answers your question. Character determines destiny. What you are will determine where you will

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go. No cage, earthly or heavenly, can destroy the soul's desire. Death is the crash of the crate that will release the human soul, and like the birds following the bent of their own homesick desire, each one will go to his own home. The soul that is base and sordid will, like Judas drawn by the gravity of his own wicked heart, go to his own place of eternal despair.

But while character is the maker of destiny, let me remind you that Christ is the maker of character. To believe in Christ is to be like him. To live as he lived, is to be sharer with him of his eternity.

Chisel in hand stood a sculptor boy,
With his marble block before him;
His face lit up with a smile of joy
As an angel dream passed o'er him.
He carved that dream in the shapeless stone,
With many a sharp incision,
With heaven's own light the sculptor shone,
He had caught that angel vision.

Sculptors of life are we, as we stand,
With souls uncarved before us,
Waiting the hour of God's command,
Our dream shall then pass o'er us.
If we carve that dream in the shapeless stone,
With many a sharp incision,
Its heavenly beauty shall be our own,
Our life that angel vision.

II

A HUMAN PERSONALITY GOD'S OPPORTUNITY¹

And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.—Isaiah 32 : 2.

The times in which Isaiah lived, like our own times, were full of troubles. Israel, God's chosen people, had drifted very far from the glory of their earlier days, and the nation was now in a very sorry plight. Under the wicked reign of Ahaz things had gone to the bad. Fraud and official corruption were the marks of his reign, and both social and political life among rich and poor were morally decayed. The supreme need of the hour was some means of deliverance for the people.

To meet this need, the time-serving politicians of the day advocated the formation of an alliance, either with Assyria or Egypt, both great adjacent empires. But Isaiah, with the true instinct of a prophet, would not consent to turn to the wisdom of heathen rulers for deliverance. He rather assured the people that God would raise up a man who would be a remedy for all the ills under which his people suffered. He refers perhaps directly to Hezekiah, but remotely and more significantly to Christ. This man whom God will send will bring relief from wicked rulers, and will be as a shelter from the blight of corrupting political winds, and like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

¹ Preached as the annual sermon before the Baptist General Convention of Texas, at Houston.

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Thus there emerges from this text the topic of my sermon: "A Human Personality God's Opportunity." God works through men, and a man, simply a human personality, is his remedy for every wrong. Inanimate principles do not save the world, or uproot the wrongs that are in it, except as they are voiced and vitalized by living men.

I

The Principle Established

In all human affairs the principle that God works through men obtains. It is seen first in what we call Christianity itself. The most distinctive feature of Christianity is the Incarnation. Sin had made an impassable gulf between God and man. Man needed to be redeemed. Why not redeem him by giving him a lot of precepts and commandments to keep? Because man had not the ability to keep precepts and commandments. It required a Divine-Human personality to deliver a sin-enthralled race. God therefore initiated man's redemption through a human personality.

In order to reach down to this world of sin and lift it up to himself, God came across the fixed gulf of separation between the pure Spirit of offended Deity, and the sinful spirit of alienated human flesh, and incarnated himself in a human personality. This personality moved like a radiant light from Bethlehem to Olivet, and then back into the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.

The principle is seen again in its application to law. God had a law to give to his people, and law is powerful.

A Human Personality God's Opportunity

Law is the molding power of civilization, and there can be no civilization that is worth the while without respect for law. A lawless nation is always a godless nation. But law is powerless without personality.

The law was given at Sinai under the most spectacular and impressive circumstances, but it gained small acceptance and had little influence in reforming the world, until it found a human personality to voice it. Until the prophet of God appeared and with the subtle charm of his personality, spoke the law, and interpreted the law, and caused it to breathe and burn with life, the law was impotent. Little more than a dead letter was the law until David sang it, and Isaiah waxed eloquent over it, and Elijah thundered it, and Jeremiah wept over its violations with a broken heart.

I am going to say, at the risk of being misunderstood, that our age is too much given to relying on legislation to cure all the ills under which the human race suffers. In the minds of some people, all things are possible with legislation. The moment anything goes wrong they fly to the legislature to get a new statute. I must not be understood as decrying the necessary legislation to secure reforms. But I insist that legislation not linked with peace-loving and God-fearing men is futile. We live in an age the best legislated in the history of the world, and it is the most lawless.

The last few years have demonstrated to all the world the absolute impotency of legislation within itself. Laws, treaties, compacts, conventions, and covenants have been treated as mere scraps of paper and trampled under foot, because in the hands of men whose hearts were not right. What a spectacle it was to see the beautiful Palace of

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Peace with its doors closed when the peace of the world had gone, and all around it rising, swelling tides of blood. The supreme need of this hour is not more legislation, but more men guided in their conduct by the principles of righteousness; not a new code, but men with new hearts is our need just now. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth must come by Jesus Christ functioning through his followers.

The principle is established again in its application to truth. We have heard that old adage that "truth is mighty and will prevail," until most of us partly believe it. But I say to you that if you mean by that that mere abstract truth by itself will prevail, then the statement finds no verification in history. Rather the fact is that truth, unsupported by a human voice and unobjectified in a human life, is about the most impotent thing in the world. As well talk about a pine tree in the forest falling to the ground and shaping itself into finished timbers, and these again into a beautiful mansion on the boulevard, as to talk about truth prevailing without a human personality to support it.

The truth of the Reformation lay in Europe for centuries, but the Reformation did not arrive until this truth found expression and was vitalized in John Wyclif and Martin Luther. The truth of evangelical Christianity was safely stored away in the magnificent temples of the Church of England, but Christianity was dying of dry rot, until this truth was voiced and vitalized in the burning personality of John Wesley. Just as a vine must have a trellis in order to climb into the upper air, so truth must have a human personality through which to express itself and make itself vital to the world.

A Human Personality God's Opportunity

It is not by abstract truth, not truth apart from a person, not a person apart from truth, but truth embodied in a person, truth possessing lips and a life, truth with eyes, hands, and feet, that is the power of the redeeming God. It was not upon truth alone that Jesus established his church, nor upon a man alone, but upon a truth-living, truth-loving, truth-possessing, truth-confessing man, and having thus established it, he said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Men are not saved by a writing, or a ritual, or a rule; men are not saved by the truth, or by a legal code; but by a Person.

We seek with word and thought,
To open the eyes of the blind;
But the word avails us naught
To make the world to our mind,
Until we have learned God's plan
And sent truth forth in a man.

The principle is seen also in its application to human government. A little more than a hundred years ago democracy burst like a new-born sun upon the gaze of the world. Optimistic political prophets thought the millennium had come. We are even now saying that democracy is the panacea for all the world's social and political ills. But democracy is an ignominious failure unless it is administered and expressed by men who love God and are unselfish. I had almost said we had better have a monarchy with the right sort of a monarch, than a democracy in the hands of political thugs and thieves.

There is a type of democracy in our day that wants to interpret liberty to mean license. When we infringe upon what persons of this type conceive to be their per-

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sonal rights, they say we are trying to make men good by law. They do not say what they mean. They say progressive democracy has departed from the democratic faith and has taken all their liberties away. What they really mean is, that progressive democracy has kept the democratic faith and has taken their liquor away. They say they want a new party to restore the old principles. What they really mean is, they want to create a political rebellion to restore booze. They say, they stand for the separation of Church and State. What they mean is, they want somebody to hold the preachers off while they loot the country and ravish the human race.

Democracy in the hands of such men is a veritable tyranny. The voice of the people becomes the voice of the devil instead of the voice of God. Democracy may be the very breath of God, or it may be a whiff of Satan. It may be a great free people united for progress and the promotion of human welfare, or it may be a howling mob controlled by passion and bent on human misery. Democracy can never become the emancipator of mankind until it is administered at the hands of men after God's own heart.

Once more, this principle is established in its application to education. We believe in education. We must believe in it. Ignorance is unjustifiable from every standpoint. Like a wand of magic education has touched the sleeping potentialities of mankind, and they have burst into new-born power. But in the light of late happenings we are waking up to the fact that education may be a neutral attainment, if not a failure, unless the man behind it is right at heart.

At no period of the world's history has passion for

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education been so fierce as in the past fifty years. Men have unloosed their purse-strings and poured their millions into the channels of education. The universities of Europe had won the admiration of the world. They had in their faculties the majority of the best-educated people living. They had alumni scattered throughout the world baptized in the spirit of higher learning. If education would have a country, it had its chance in Europe. But behold a country worshiping at the shrine of education, hurled over a precipice into a sea of blood.

The sorest evils under which men suffer today are not the evils of ignorance, but those inflicted upon us by educated scamps. Those were not ignorant men who brought on the bloodiest war in history. They were the world's greatest scholars and boasted of their superior *kultur*. And yet a bunch of consummate idiots from the insane asylums could not have gotten the world into a worse predicament than these scholars did. The greatest menace to human welfare is an educated man with a bad heart. A civilization without God in its education is doomed. The worth of an education depends upon the quality of the man behind it. If he be not a man after God's own heart, his education will be a hurt and not a help to humanity.

This principle runs through all history and all experience. It is not by precept, but by personality; not by breathless books and inanimate principles, but by breathing men and women, that God is to win this world. If the earth is ever to be touched with heaven and washed from its sins, God must do it through consecrated personalities, through men and women who are the duplicates, the living epistles of the God-Man.

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One or two things are inevitable upon the establishing of this principle. If what I have said is true, then the sublimest task that God ever gave to mortals here below is the task of making the right sort of men. In the light of this truth, it is better to make a good citizen, than to make the finest military officer on earth. In the beginning God said, "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness," and I somehow feel he is saying that to us yet.

I have read with the keenest interest everything I have been able to find on the causes of the World War. Where does this terrible war root itself into the past? is a question no man ought to leave alone. The safest and sanest thinkers of the world are saying that the war came because our material civilization had outrun our moral and spiritual development. We had a more splendid material civilization than we had manhood. In science, and art, and literature, and culture, and all that constitutes a high civilization, we had gone farther than we had gone in the moral and spiritual development of the race. And when the temptations that attend a high state of civilization came, passion ruled instead of moral restraint, and the world collapsed.

The men who made the guns say that we had a better gun than we had a man behind the gun. That is, the gun came nearer functioning to the end for which it was made than man came to functioning to the end for which he was made. And see what guns they made! Such scientific accuracy, and wholesale destructiveness was never achieved in gun-making. Who does not believe if we had spent a tithe as much effort and money in making men as we spent making guns, there had been no war?

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We may need long-ranged, high-powered guns, but we need godly men infinitely more. To build institutions that create an atmosphere in which men can be saved and grown into high moral leaders, is the sublimest task that earth knows.

It is inevitable, also, that this truth places certain limitations around God and increases the measure of human responsibility. So far as we know, God has shut himself up to the redeemed life as his opportunity to redeem another life. It is an awful thing to contemplate, if it is true, that there are certain things God cannot do without you. He has imposed these limitations upon himself, but in so doing he has placed terrible responsibility upon you. Hear the great violinist, Antonio:

When any man holds twixt hand and chin
A violin of mine, he will be glad
That Stradivari lived, and made violins,
And made them of the best.
For, while God gives them skill,
I make them instruments to play upon,
God using me to help Him.
If my hand slacked,
I should rob God, since He is fullest good,
Leaving a blank behind, instead of violins.
He could not make Antonio Stradivari's violins,
Without Antonio.

A little mother was teaching her child the Sunday-school lesson. Upon the leaflet containing the lesson was a picture, always an interesting thing to a child, of a heathen mother offering her own little girl upon an altar to appease the anger of her heathen god. The little girl looking at the picture, said, "Mother, does God

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know that this mother is doing this?" "Quickly the mother replied, "Yes, my child, God knows everything." "Well, mother," said the child, "does God care?" "Yes, my child, God cares," said the mother. Then came the stunning question—oh, how children can ask them!—"Then, mother, if God knows about it, and God cares, why don't he put a stop to it?"

The little mother did not answer the last question, but I answer it now. God has not put a stop to that heathen barbarity because you and I have not put a stop to it. The staggering reproach of Christendom today is that we have not put a stop to it, and the pain we have suffered in this land, and are suffering, is God's judgment on us for our sin. Your heart and mine are the organs of God's pity, and the channels of his love. He cannot hush the cry of the world's heart, he cannot heal the broken-hearted, or preach deliverance to the captives, or recovery of sight to the blind, without your lips, your hands, and your feet. A human personality is God's last opportunity.

II

The Kind of Personality Needed for the World's Deliverance

The text indicates what are to be the elements in the personality that is needed.

He is to be first a man of strength. The symbol of his strength is a rock. He must have iron in his blood and God in his heart. He must be strong defensively, against every wind of erroneous doctrine and every form of insidious temptation. God's man is not worth his room

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if he does not stand in the way of the progress of everything that is wrong.

He must be strong offensively, propagating the good and the true in the face of difficulties that like mountains before him rise. In the strength that God gives he must be able to laugh at all disaster and smile on all his foes. He must be the strength that "in danger knows no fear, and in darkness knows no doubt."

Courage is strength. "Be of good courage, and he will strengthen thy heart," is a divine injunction. Courage is a winning grace. The man without a high order of courage need never start out to win people to right things. From Orient to Occident people love courage and admire a brave man. Every hope of winning is lost to the man who is afraid. Better be a man with one talent and a courageous heart, than have ten talents and walk with the fear of a coward. War is illogical and unchristian, but it will never cease to fascinate, because it furnishes so great a stage for the display of courage.

Convictions with the courage to express them constitute strength. A winning personality must have a clearly defined creed. The man must know what he believes and believe it with his whole soul. His Christian feeling and sympathy ought to be broad and free from bigotry. Our gospel is the message of the capacious, high-souled Son of God, and it will shrivel on the lips of a little pesky man. But his doctrine must be clear and his convictions deep and strong like a mighty stream flowing between solid banks. A broad, expansive lake avails nothing to the electric power of the world; but that lake confined within the rock-ribbed banks of the

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Niagara is capable of turning the machinery of a thousand cities.

The second element that must enter into this personality is sympathy. God's deliverer must be a man of sympathy. There are two distinct types of personality that stand out in history; Alexander, the Cæsars, Nero, the Sultan of Turkey, the Kaiser of Germany, represent one type. They are men devoid of sympathy, and their presence in the world made untold misery and caused men to shed seas of blood. Oliver Cromwell, Alfred the Great, George Washington, Robert E. Lee, Abraham Lincoln, and Woodrow Wilson, represent the other type. They are the uncrowned kings of the world, not by the prerogative of power, but by the influence which they exert. The world has always gone forward or backward in morals and in everything good according as one or the other of these types has ruled.

We live in a "weary land," where men and women have gone down in the struggle of life, and need some one who can be touched with the feeling of their infirmity to help them. Life's hurts and wounds and disappointments come sooner or later to us all. Those we love sicken and fade and fall before our eyes. Our hopes go out, our dreams vanish, and our hearts break. The cruel hand of opposition is laid some time upon us all, and with all the world we long for sympathy. Not justice, not a square deal—these we need to be sure—but we need sympathy infinitely more. Real, practical, Christlike sympathy would ensure all the rest.

When the prophet of God laid his staff by the hand of his servant upon the dead child, the child remained dead; but when he drew near and stretched himself upon

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the lad, mouth to mouth, heart to heart, hand to hand, it was then that the child, thrilled with returning warmth, arose to life. Sympathy is the breath at close range that imparts life. It quickens, it regenerates, it reforms, it saves. It is the brain and heart implicated in salvation.

No one who is all head and no heart, can win for God. No blaze of intellect, no range of scholarship, no royal position, no mere granite strength, can make a strong, winning personality. Only heart qualities can do that. Sidney Lanier said :

O trade, O trade, would thou wert dead;
The world wants heart, 'tis tired of head.

And look what an opportunity this terrible war has brought us to use this most powerful of all human appeals to win the world for God. Sympathy of course is rooted in love. Hate has done its worst. It has wasted our wealth, and ravished the manhood and womanhood of the world. There are ten million gold stars on the service flags of the world today, representing as many boys who never came back. Two and a half million of those boys who did come back, came crippled and maimed and handicapped for life. Millions of women made widows, other millions of children made orphans, and from the faces of all these and more the smiles are gone, and laughter is a forgotten art.

This awful war has brought Christianity its greatest opportunity. May God deliver us now from that type of humanity that is void of sympathy; which is willing to commercialize human tragedy and coin money out of human blood; which can see Lazarus unattended at the

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gate, and feel not the pangs of his hunger and the poverty of his rags. God save us now from the complacent pietist who is satisfied to sit and sing, "There is rest for the weary, on the other side of Jordon," while the butchered and prostrate world cries for help. I may not know what this torn world wants. I think it does not know itself. But I do know what it needs. It needs the great capacious love and practical sympathy of Jesus made regnant in the hearts and hands of his people. He cannot function for a broken world except through his followers.

I was born as free as the silvery light
That laughs in a Southern fountain:
Free as the sea-fed bird that nests
On Scandinavian mountain,
Yet I think of the power benign that made
And bound men one to another;
And I feel in my brother's fear afraid,
And ashamed in the shame of my brother.

Once more, the personality that is to be God's deliverer must embody the grace of helpfulness. He must be like "rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Less fortunate souls must instinctively lean upon him because he is helpful.

The best biography that was ever written contained only five words: "He went about doing good." It is the story of the earthly life of Jesus. Wherever he went he scattered the bloom and blessing of life. He touched disease, and it turned into health. He touched ignorance, and it unfolded into light. He touched weakness, and it was clothed with strength.

Jesus is the world's pattern for service, and the man

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or woman whose life is not filled with helpfulness and healing is as one born out of season. The world just now will spurn the man who professes to be Christ's and yet does not help it Godward and heavenward. The human race is not to be exploited for your good. It is not a cluster to be squeezed into your cup. It is your opportunity to serve. Be a helpful Christian.

Speak today with the certitude of the Forty-sixth Psalm:

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains tremble with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved, he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

III

The Power and Possibilities of a Christlike Life

Think of the power released in the world through such a life as Paul, or Carey, or Wesley, or Judson, or Spurgeon. The great missionary movement, the mightiest religious movement that calls men together on this globe today, the movement that is sweeping the world in the vortex of its power, is the direct outgrowth of one sermon preached a little more than a hundred years ago by William Carey. Doctor Carroll said that if you would strike the level of that sermon and sight back, you would

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not find another of its height until you came to Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost. The great Sunday-school movement that enrolls its millions and belts the earth with its organization is the direct outgrowth of the efforts of one modest man who sought only to bless the neglected children around his home.

It is claimed that a particle of radium so small that it cannot be seen except with the most powerful microscope, possesses a power to blaze with energy and light for thirty thousand years. If God has hidden in the curve of an almost invisible speck of radium an energy whose pulses beat through tens of thousands of years, what possibilities has he not hidden within the spirit of his child? If such a future can be predicted of a microscopic particle of dust, who will dare to fix any limit for the range and destiny of a human soul? Who will say that God is mightier in the atom than in the human spirit? The power of a human personality linked with Almighty God, is mightier than armies, and will endure when the pyramids have crumbled into dust and the last flake of the ashes of a consumed world have blown away.

I stood one evening on the Gulf coast. It was a summer day and the beauty of the evening was such as I had seldom seen. As the king of the day retired and sank behind the gilded horizon of the west, out from the blue of the sea and up the blue of the skies rose the queen of the night. My imagination heard that going sun call back to the coming moon, and say: "My day's appointed task is done, my brief race is run. Light thou the land, and dispel the darkness from the sea, and occupy these heavens and this earth until I return."

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Then the moon went to her task and did her best all night long. It seemed to me I never saw her do so well. As I lay awake and watched her shine, I remembered Olive's brow and Him who ascended there. I heard him say, as the disciples gazed on his glory-lighted face: " My day's appointed task is done, my earthly race is run. Light thou the land and the sea, and gild the whole earth with blessing. Occupy until I return." This little parable points the believer's task. Life at its best is the daily remembrance, and the faithful performance of that task.

To love some one more dearly every day,
To help a wandering child to find his way.
To ponder over a noble thought and pray,
And smile when evening falls—
This is my task.

To follow truth as blind men long for light,
To do my best from dawn of day till night,
To keep my heart fit for His holy sight,
And answer when He calls—
This is my task.

And then my Saviour by and by to meet,
When faith has made her task on earth complete,
And lay my homage at the Master's feet
Within the jasper walls—
This crowns my task.

III

CHRISTIANITY AND WOMAN¹

Text: My soul doth magnify the Lord, for he hath looked upon the low estate of his handmaiden; from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.—Luke 1 : 48.

I come before you this evening, my friends, keenly aware of the risk that a man takes in undertaking to speak on woman. I have heard that it is commonly believed among women that a man can talk with less sense on that subject than any other.

Woman's forwardness in response to religious appeal has led some men to strange conclusions. They regard woman as a “weaker vessel,” and her prominence in church activities, they say, is a reflection on Christianity. It brands Christianity as only fit for women and children, something that is effeminate and does not commend itself to the masculine qualities of the race.

But if we are to discard Christianity because of woman's prominence in it, then we must discard some other things also. The number of students in the college grades of our institutions of learning is about three to one in favor of the women. About seven-eighths of the teachers in the public-school system of the country are women. If you are going to put away Christianity because women predominate in it, then put away education also.

The same is true of literature. George Eliot and Jane

¹ Baccalaureate sermon before Woman's Missionary Training School, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

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Porter wrote stronger novels than Walter Scott. Mrs. Browning wrote better poetry than Robert Browning. Ella Wheeler Wilcox wrote as good poetry as Whittier, and Mrs. Wordsworth as good as Longfellow. The best history of the United States ever written was by a woman—Emma Willard. Annie Steele and Fannie Crosby have written hymns that will outlast Pope's *Essay on Man*. If you are going to discard Christianity because of woman's prominence in it, then discard literature also.

The Christian system in its very infancy won the heart and patronage of Saul of Tarsus, a man who, by all the standards of measuring men, stood head and shoulders above the men of his day. Among thinkers, it has captured men like Kant, and Locke, and Sir Isaac Newton. Among warriors it has captured men like Cromwell, Wellington, Washington, and Lee. Among statesmen it has captured men like Gladstone, Bryan, and Woodrow Wilson. It is no weak system that gathers around it such men as these. The large number of women embracing Christianity is due not to the weakness of Christianity, but to the wickedness of men. Now coming to my subject, let me say:

I

First, that *Christianity has given us woman at her best*. There were women in the world before Christ came, to be sure, but they were considered very inferior beings—the mere chattel and property of man. Take Greek culture at its best as seen in Socrates, the wisest man of his day. Socrates thanked the gods every day,

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he said, for three things: First, that he was a Greek and not a barbarian; second, that he was a free man and not a slave; and third, that he was a man and not a woman. That is woman in the light of Greek culture at its highest.

Take Jewish culture, which finds its highest expression in the Ten Commandments under Moses. Listen to it, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, wife, manservant, maidservant, ox or ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor’s.” Here the wife is classed with the ox, the ass, the house, and the slaves, as man’s possession. This is woman in the light of Hebrew religion and culture at their best.

But Jesus has altered all that. Mary, his mother, sang the morning hymn, the sunrise song of the Christian dispensation when she said: “My soul doth magnify the Lord, for he hath looked upon the low estate of his handmaiden; from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.” In saying that, she spoke in the name of universal womanhood, and interpreted the innermost mind and heart of Christianity toward woman.

And then on Calvary Jesus died for woman as well as for man, and in the light of the Cross she is invested with a new dignity and a new worth. She ceases to be a chattel and becomes an individual. She ceases to be a means and becomes an end. She ceases to be a toy and becomes a treasure. She ceases to be a slave and becomes a soul.

Paul sums up the results of Christ’s death in this one pregnant sentence, “In Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free, male nor female.” A woman is just as precious and worthy in the sight of God as a man, and all distinctions which imply inferiority and degradation

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break down. The first convert to Christianity in Europe was a woman, Lydia. A woman, Priscilla, had the largest share in the conversion and training of Apollos, the most eloquent preacher of the New Testament. Christianity has brought woman to a throne and given back true womanhood to the world.

Let us treat woman then as Christ treated her. He who despises womanhood does cruel violence to his own soul. If I were asked what quality I considered most helpful to a young man, next to faith in Christ, I would say, reverence for womanhood. When you put a woman in the mire you are bound to follow her. No country or civilization will ever rise higher than its women. We crown ourselves when we put woman in her proper place.

II

Christianity has also brought us the comradeship of woman in service. So long as woman was the slave and drudge of man, she could never become the friend and comrade of man in service. Her worth had to be revealed before her companionship was discovered.

Jesus discovered woman as a companion and friend. He loved Mary and Martha as well as Lazarus. He did not regard woman as a toy and a flirt whose every thought turned to courtship and marriage, but looked upon her as the soul of sympathy and teachableness, and sought her as his disciple and friend.

Paul is thought by some to have been a little hard on women, and yet that impression has been gained by overemphasis on one lone passage of Scripture. His letter to the Romans proves that he followed the example

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of his Lord and courted the friendship of the women. In that letter he mentions Phœbe, the servant of the church at Cenchrea, likely a deaconess, dispensing her own means, "a succorer of many." A world of unmentioned kindness and a life of self-devotion is hidden away in his brief words. Paul bespeaks for her the love and esteem of the brethren.

He mentions Tryphena and Tryphosa, two sisters probably, ladies of elegance and refinement. Their names indicate that they belonged to the exclusive set, and yet they are mentioned in connection with the households of Narcissus and Aristobulus, both groups of slaves. These elegant women doubtless gave up their ease and luxury, and true to the Master who had liberated them, became Paul's companions in labor.

He mentioned also the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord; and Julia, the mother of Rufus, who because of her love and devotion, he was pleased to call mother. He mentions Priscilla and Aquila, a wedded couple who had formed a sort of an evangelistic party to preach the gospel. Priscilla, the woman, seems to have been the big end of the party, the "superior wife of an inferior husband," and became a teacher of conspicuous ability in those strenuous days.

This chapter, the sixteenth of Romans, sets out very clearly Paul's attitude toward women. It teaches also that it is the unique feature of Christianity to bind men and women in the bonds of pure and lofty friendship and comradeship in service to mankind. They complete and complement each other. A pure, healthy comradeship between the sexes in service to the world is the distinct gift of Christianity.

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III

Christianity has given us once more in woman the purest and highest exemplification of love. While woman was the chattel and toy of man, to please and gratify his beastly nature, she was not sought in the holy name of love, but in the loathsome name of lust. The story is told that one of the daughters of General Booth of salvation army fame went to Paris as a girl of eighteen to preach the gospel to that gay and wicked city. When she told them, the men and women of Paris, that God loved them they laughed and giggled in her face. Love meant only one thing to them, and that was the lowest and lewdest. That is the debasement that love suffers where Christ is not.

Christianity has saved love and made it always to mean the highest and purest and best. Christianity is the author of the Christian wife. With all its culture, a wife was not found in Greece. In Old Testament times a wife was one of two or more, and where polygamy exists wifehood can never be realized. It is Christianity that teaches that as is the relationship between Christ and his church, so is the relationship between husband and wife. Christianity signally crowns and glorifies wifehood.

The most beautiful love story that has ever been written is the story of Ruth and Naomi of Bible fame. Mr. Charles W. Hubner has versified that story as follows:

“ Entreat me not to leave thee,
Entreat me not,” she said,
And on Naomi’s bosom
Weeping, she bowed her head.

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“ For wheresoe’er thou goest,
There will I follow thee;
And wheresoe’er thou dwellest,
There shall my lodging be.

“ Henceforth, beloved mother,
Thy people shall be mine,
And all other gods forsaking,
I’ll serve no God but thine.

“ I’ll die where’er thou diest,
And there will buried be;
Bear witness, God! no power
But death parts thee and me.”

Fame on her scrolls has graven
Great deeds, and words that prove
The majesty, the beauty,
The might of woman’s love.

But where a deed so splendid?
Where words that nobler are?
Mid fame’s great orbs of glory,
She shines the morning star.

When spoke this Moab woman,
Her mouth’s ambrosial breath
Stirred chords that slumbered voiceless,
Till waked by love and faith.

Her touch divine endowed them
With deathless Love and youth;
Breathe but the words, “ Naomi,”
And they will murmur, “ Ruth.”

Where is there to be found a more beautiful expression of woman’s devotion? With a love as pure and holy as ever throbbed in human breast, with a heart

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responsive to the pleadings of divine love, peculiarly endowed to bring men into the kingdom of heaven, to be a giddy-minded, hollow-hearted, pleasure-loving woman, trifling away the wealth of her affection on a world that has debased her from the beginning, is a sin of the deepest dye. Every home in our land, every interest of our Lord's kingdom, and every needed reform in our country, sighs for woman's fidelity to her Godgiven crown.

I read this story the other day. The train had pulled into the union station in one of our cities. A sprightly young woman, dressed in a smart spring suit, wafted herself up to the gatekeeper and proceeded to try to hypnotize him. "Will you please let me through," she said appealingly. "Can't do it, Miss, it's against the rules," said the gateman. "But, oh, I do want to see him when he gets off; he'll be so disappointed if I am not there; I just must see him," the little breezy woman replied. The gatekeeper looked at her, and said: "Well, maybe I can take a chance. I spose she's just married, and she ain't seen him since they were spliced up," and with that he let her pass in. The train pulled in, she ran alongside the coaches until she came to the baggage-car, and the baggageman handed her out a little muzzled pug-dog, which she took in her arms and caressed and kissed to her heart's content, and as she passed out the gate she threw a bewitching smile at the keeper, as if to say, " Didn't I work you ? "

My friends, it is difficult for me to speak in moderate terms of a woman who will despise motherhood, count children an unnecessary burden, prostitute her crown, and waste the wealth of her winning affections on a

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pug-dog. In the light of New Testament womanhood she is a disgrace to her sex.

You remember in E. P. Roe's book, *What Can She Do*, Edith is his leading character. This girl was left when young with the responsibility of a large and helpless family. They had been reared in affluence and had come to poverty. Edith worked hard to save the situation. The children were almost wrecked several times and did not come through their adversities unstained. The consecration and resourcefulness of this girl, however, ultimately conquered.

It was now Edith's wedding-day, and little Scotch Malcolm, one of the trophies of her patient service, stood up after the ceremony had been said and made a little impromptu speech like this: "I am but a little mon, but I so'times have great tho'ts; an' I have learned fra my gude wife there, and this sweet blossom o' the Lord, that woman can bring a' this wourld to God, if she will. That's what she can do."

And the little Scotchman is right. Woman can, if she will, bring this world back to God; and I believe she will.

IV

WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE HUMAN RACE?

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.—Genesis 1 : 27.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?—Jeremiah 17 : 9.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.—Matthew 1 : 21.

The first two of these scriptures refer to the same being, but at different periods of his career. At the one time man is the glory of the universe of God; at the other he is the scandal of creation. As he came from the hand of the Creator, man is the most glorious thing God ever made; as he is marred by sin, he is the most inglorious of all God's creatures. He is a flagrant contradiction in himself; the best and the worst unite in him. There is everything good and everything bad in man; he is both great and small, both noble and mean. In order to a careful and profitable study of the ills of the human race today, let us consider the subject under three phases: Man at his best, man at his worst, and the remedy for man's ills.

I

First of all, consider with me *man at his best*. A great Hebrew poet, speaking of man at his best, said of him:

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Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,
And hast crowned him with glory and honor.
Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;
Thou hast put all things under his feet;
All sheep and oxen,
Yea, and the beasts of the field,
The fowls of the air, the fish of the sea,
And whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

Shakespeare, speaking of man at his best, said, " What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! " The Bible everywhere teaches the dignity of man. In matchless splendor of phrase and paragraph from first to last it teaches man's greatness here and now, and his coming greater greatness when redeemed and in the world to come.

To arrive at a fair estimate of man at his best, some comparisons will help us. Of all that God made in creation man is the only being that was inbreathed with the breath of life. A company of men were sitting about a camp-fire one night discussing religion. After they had all spent their opinions on the subject of creation, they called on the old Negro cook to say what he thought about it. He straightened himself up in the light of the open fire, and said: " Well sah, in de readin uv de Bibul, I's dun noticed dat dar's a diffunce twixt de way Gawd made a man and de way dat he made de wurl. When Gawd made the wurl he used his power, but when he made de man he used hisself. Dat's what make me allus think man wus kin to Gawd." I defy the world to beat the old Negro's interpretation. He was a Christian

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philosopher. The soul of a man is the veritable signature of Deity, and that old man voiced the deepest cry of the human heart everywhere. Man is the only creature that can reason. There is more than a "missing link" between man and the animal nearest like him. I was walking down Main street in Dallas one day, and came to a crowd surging and pushing over each other to get to see something that was being exhibited in the show-window. I pressed my way through the throng as curious as any, and found that the object of curiosity was a dead chimpanzee. The little fellow was the property of a showman in town, and for some reason had sickened and died. His owner had had an undertaker treat the body of the little "ancestor" to preserve it, and it was now dressed in a boy's suit of clothes, sitting in a chair, his legs crossed, a silk hat on, a cigar in his mouth, looking out on the immense crowd that congested the street. He was about the size of a fourteen-year-old boy, looked very human, and was the best argument I ever saw for the Darwinian theory. As I stood there and looked, I heard a man say, "He is very much like an uncle of mine." And really, to tell you confidentially, he favored some of my kinsfolk.

But mark you, that chimpanzee, much as he resembled man in physical features, is the same little animal that he was when he came out of Noah's ark. He has never advanced one step, he has never initiated anything, he has never reasoned an inch from his nose; while man, his competitor, has calculated the distance to the farthest star, has measured the dimensions of the remotest world, has mastered the mysterious forces of nature to do his bidding. He has navigated the seas,

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subdued the land, leveled the hills, tunneled the mountains, harnessed the lightning, cabled the oceans, and on wings of his own making soared into the heavens. Man is today God's unapproachable giant of progress. Tell me that man is kin to a monkey? There is the distance of infinity between them, and I resent with horror the suggestion of such a low origin. It is a galling disgrace on creation.

Man also is the only creature that has a moral nature. The sense of moral guilt and the ravages of an outraged conscience, belong only to man. Look yonder at your mere animal: he murders his prey, licks the blood off his paws, goes his way untroubled, and lies down to undisturbed sleep. But a human murderer cannot do that. He must be haunted with the specter of his crime and the bitings of remorse. As in Pilate's case, the stain of his victim's blood will not wash out, and his moral accuser lives forever afterward in his breast.

Trust me: no torture that the poets fain,
Can match the fierce, unutterable pain
He feels, who day and night, devoid of rest,
Carries his own accuser in his breast.

Man is the only creature that worships and prays. Wherever he dwells on this earth, however far removed from civilization and gospel light, a religious sense inheres in him, the sense of moral guilt depresses him, and in some form or fashion he worships what he conceives to be God. I am not in favor of deifying human nature, nor do I believe in defaming it. Man at his best has unmistakable traces of divine origin. The marks of a royal ancestry are written all over him. He is a miracle

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from the hand of God. As such, he is the glory of creation and the hope of the world.

II

Consider with me in the second place, *man at his worst*. Somewhere in the career of man, between the time of my first text and that of the second, something happened to him, so that it seems impossible that the two records could refer to the same being. I shall consult the same sources of information here as I did on man at his best. Another Hebrew poet speaking of man at his worst, says:

The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores.

A Hebrew prophet and apostle, said:

They are all gone out of the way,
They are together become unprofitable;
There is none that doeth good, no, not one.
Their throat is an open sepulchre;
With their tongues they have used deceit;
The poison of asps is under their lips;
Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness;
Their feet are swift to shed blood;
Destruction and misery are in their ways;
And the way of peace they have not known.
There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Jesus, another Hebrew prophet, if you choose to call him that, said, "Out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covet-

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ings, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, lust, avarice, pride, foolishness." All this brood of demons live in and emerge from the heart of man. The heart of man is a veritable magazine of evil possibilities. Pascal, the great French thinker, speaking of man at his worst, said:

What a chimera is man! What a subject of contradiction! What a confused chaos! A feeble worm of the earth! A mere huddle of uncertainty; the glory and the scandal of the universe.

Now, are this account of man, and the one I read a bit ago, both true? Can they both be true? Yes. Man is at once the best and the worst God has made. Is man today true to the facts as stated here concerning him? Is he the base and culpable wretch that these who have written about him say he is? Let us not dodge the issue. Do not try to shield man unless the facts will bear you out in shielding him. Be just and fair, but be true. Have these critics done man an injustice?

A few years ago a great war burst suddenly upon this world; a war which for magnitude and the number of people involved in its sufferings and miseries, has no parallel in history. This war is teaching us many things, but nothing more clearly and forcibly than this: it is revealing the heart. War removes restraints and leaves what is in man to come out. We are learning now what man will do, his capacity for good and evil, as never before. And let it be said, and said plainly, that man now is confirming the worst as well as the best, that has been said of him. His critics have not been unfair. As bad as it is, they have told the truth about him, and man himself unrestrained now, is proving it.

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Thanks to Mr. Carnegie, we have been furnished a careful and detailed investigation of conditions in the Balkan wars. Mr. Bryce has secured for us a report of what has been done in Belgium. From many reliable resources we have learned of the cruelties and barbarities of the "unspeakable Turk" upon the defenseless Armenians. For atrocious cruelty, for brutality and beastliness, these conditions are unsurpassed in human annals. Besides, we have the privilege of reading each morning the stream of news that comes from the seats of war and the centers of sin, that makes the heart sick and the head faint. How does man stand with you in the light of all these things? Do you find it difficult to read it all, and retain your confidence in man?

But come closer home, and open your eyes upon the vileness and the villainy that is practised in ear-shot and eye-reach of your door. Go to your cities, and lift the cover at midnight, and look at their filth. Inform yourself. Look the facts in the face. And you can reach but one conclusion: and that is that here nineteen hundred years since Jesus was born in Bethlehem, there is no cruelty which man will not inflict, no outrage which he will not commit, no brutality which he will not practise, and no depth of infamy to which he will not descend. All the butcheries and brutalities of which you have ever read, have been matched right here before your eyes in the opening of the twentieth century.

There are men today who in the pulpit deny the doctrine of human depravity. But I defy them now to deny that doctrine, and explain satisfactorily man's latest conduct. If man is not a fallen being, and his heart is not radically at fault, then half that is going on in the

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world today is without a reason. I say it once more: man is a sinner. He is a sinner by nature: passions that would make a hell riot in his blood. He is a sinner by practise; every conceivable crime he has committed and is still committing. Let no man ever again scorn the doctrine of original sin. It is that, simply that, and only that, that has hurled this world over a precipice today, and into a sea of blood.

The famous Robert Hall in one of his great sermons drew a word-picture in which his wonderful imagination did its best work. His picture was of a celestial messenger supposed to be on a visit to this world, studying man. The messenger is led to one of the battle-fields of Europe, and Robert Hall describes what he sees. If his war terminology was changed a little, it would exactly fit the situation in Europe today. He says:

On a sudden the field of combat opens on his astonished vision. It is a field which men call "glorious." A hundred thousand warriors stand in opposed ranks. Light gleams on their burnished steel. Their plumes and banners wave. Hill echoes to hill the noise of moving rank and squadron—the neigh and tramp of steeds—the trumpet, drum, and bugle-call. There is a momentary pause—a silence like that which precedes the fall of a thunderbolt—like that awful silence which is precursor to the desolating rage of the whirlwind. In an instant, flash succeeding flash, pour columns of smoke along the plain. The iron tempest sweeps, heaping man, horse, and car in undistinguished ruin.

In shouts of rushing hosts, in shock of breasting steed, in peals of musketry, in artillery's roar, in saber's clash, in thick and gathering clouds of smoke and dust, all human touch and sense are lost. He sees lopped and bleeding limbs scattered; gashed, dismembered trunks outspread gore-clothed, lifeless; brains bursting from crushed skulls, blood gushing from sabered

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necks, severed heads whose mouths mutter rage amidst the palsy-ing of the last agony.

He hears the mingled cry of anguish and despair issuing from a thousand bosoms in which a thousand bayonets turn; the convulsive screams of anguish from heaps of mangled half-expiring victims, over which the heavy artillery lumber and crush into one mass bone and muscle and sinew, while the fetlock of the war-horse drips with blood starting from the last palpitation of the burst heart on which the hoof pivots.

"And then," Robert Hall says, in the midst of a scene like that, "What will this celestial messenger say?" He will say: "This is not earth, this is hell! This is not man, but demon tormenting demon." Well, that is exactly what a celestial messenger from the glory world would find in this world today, if he were to come—except worse. And all of it has been brought about by man. Man is confirming the worst that has ever been said about him.

It is rather interesting that right at a time when modern thinkers had bowed the devil out of the universe, and were ridiculing the idea of his personality, his majesty set up his seat right in their midst, and hell broke loose in unprecedented fury.

Some folks don't believe in a devil now,
As our fathers used to do,
They've forced the door of the largest creed
To let his Majesty through.

There isn't a print of his cloven foot,
Or a fiery dart of his bow,
To be found in the earth or the air beneath,
For the people have voted it so.

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But whom shall we hold responsible
For the everlasting row
To be found in home, in Church, in State,
To earth's remotest bound,
If the devil by unanimous consent
Is nowhere to be found?

Won't some one step to the front forthwith,
And make his bow, and show
How the crimes and frauds of one day spring up!
We'd like to know.
The devil is voted not to be,
And of course the devil is gone,
But simple folks would like to know
Who carries his business on.

There are men in this world today, as there were in the days of Jesus, who are demon-possessed, very incarnations of Satan, and whose trail through life is as dirty and slimy as that of the serpent that first taught Adam and Eve to sin. If I am any judge at all, the devil is about the liveliest creature in this world today.

III

Now let me speak in the last place, of *the remedy for man's ills*. Is there a remedy for man's disease? Yes, nobody believes he is hopelessly ill, but men do not agree about the remedy. Education has been recommended as a remedy. We have been told that education will eradicate all the evils in man that infest us. *Kultur* they say will cure everything. Well, we tried it, and we tried it to a finish. And right when we were worshiping at the shrine of education, and right when the world was being baptized in the spirit of higher learning,

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and right in the heart of that section whose universities had in their faculties the majority of the best-educated people of the world, a volcano of hell was unsealed, covering the earth with the burning lava of man's wrath; and men who were reputed around the world for scholarship and *kultur* acted like brutes, and even worse. A set of idiots could not have gotten the world into a worse mess than these men did. I am for education, but education is no savior.

We have been told that science will save the race, and we have tried it, and tried it well. Not only has science not saved us, but it has increased man's capacity for brutality, and equipped him for murder on a scale hitherto unknown. The submarine, the howitzer, the zep-pelin, the machine-gun, the war gas, and a hundred other things for wholesale murder as devilish as these, are science's contribution to the inhumanity of man. The scientists are claiming that this is the first scientific war in the history of the world, and it is the cruellest and most brutal. If there is any glory in this war for science, she is welcome to it, so far as I am concerned. We have been told that law would save the world. So we built our beautiful Palace of Peace at the cost of millions, and then wrote our pacts to obtain between nations and guarantee the peace of the world. And now it is being thrown into our face every day that the world has not known a more lawless age than ours. We have discovered that treaties and pacts are no more than scraps of paper to be trampled under foot by godless nations. And it is almost grotesque, not to say tragical, that our Palace of Peace is closed against rising tides of blood. Oh yes, we have made progress, progress

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in material things. Man is a wizard and his progress in the world of matter is an unceasing wonder. But every step he has taken forward has been toward a chasm. Progress is nothing, gets nowhere, and gains nothing, unless it gets us closer to God. Progress that leaves God out, is progress backward, and that is the way we have been going.

Talk about stopping war? Let me give you a formula that you can count on: God, added to this world, makes peace; God, added to human life, makes happiness. God, subtracted from this world, leaves war; God, subtracted from human life, leaves hell. Wherever in the nation God is not, there is war; and wherever in the life God is not, there is hell. Is there anywhere any salvation for man? Is the human race hopelessly depraved? Is man's heart incurably sick? Are we to give up and die in despair? No! Never!

Christianity will save this world if we will give it a chance. The only reason it has not saved it, we have not given it a ghost of a chance. We have hindered it, and hampered it, and hobbled it, and muzzled it, with our stinginess and our laziness and our stolid indifference. We have put it in a corner, left it to the last, made it the frazzle-end of everything, treated it like an orphan, put it at the base instead of at the summit of life as we were commanded, until the world holds us and our religion in contempt and our lives are powerless.

Let us change the emphasis in life: put it on regeneration, rather than reformation; on a new heart, rather than a new code; on conscience, rather than convenience; on Christ's kingdom, rather than pleasure; on doing God's will, rather than serving self; on treasure in

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heaven, rather than bank accounts on earth—when we do these things, our Christianity will be virile and conquering and it will save this suffering world. Who does not believe that if we, God's people, would go out to fight the battles of righteousness with the same loyal obedience and self-abandonment with which our army is fighting the Teutons today—who does not believe we would win? My brethren, I call you, preacher and all, to a new consecration of life. Oh, you say, you haven't time, you have to live. No you don't. No man has to live.

A man must live! We justify
Low shift and trick, to treason high,
A little vote for a little gold,
Or a whole senate bought and sold,
With this self-evident reply—
“A man must live!”

But is it so? Pray tell me why
Life at such a cost you have to buy?
In what religion were you told
A man must live?
There are times when a man must die!
Imagine for a battle-cry
From soldiers with a sword to hold,
From soldiers with a flag unfurled,
This coward's whine, this liar's lie—
“A man must live!”

No sir! A man does not have to live, but he does have to die. A man was not saved to live, but he was saved to serve.

V

FOR CHRIST'S SAKE AND THE CHURCH

" For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." —2 Corinthians 4 : 5.

" For his body's sake, which is the church." —Colossians 1 : 24.

This simple little phrase " For Jesus' sake " is one of the most meaningful in all the vocabulary of Christian thought. I fear sometimes if it is not losing for us its serious significance. We utter it in our prayers, our sermons, and our songs, and its freshness seems to have gotten away.

This phrase defines and simplifies Christianity so that the humblest and least subtle mind can understand it. Christianity alone, of all the religions of the world, centers in a person. It makes its chief motive love to a person. The very heart of Christianity is loyalty to Christ. No other great teacher, so far as I know, ever taught men to do right except for right's sake. Christianity insists that we do right for Jesus' sake.

I

I wish to use the phrase first, to define *what it is to become a Christian*. More people than you think are seeking constantly and with insatiable curiosity to understand what Christianity really is, and what it means to become a Christian. Books are being written, sermons and addresses are being delivered, and all manner of inquiries are being made to get a clear answer to this

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question, "What is it to become a Christian?" Millions of people come together every week to hear a fresh discussion of it, and as long as men come and go the question will not down.

Is it possible for one to set out and compress in brief axiomatic form the truth that answers this question, so as to give all who earnestly inquire the information that is intelligent and convincing and that satisfies? I think so. Suppose we try it.

To become a Christian is to come into such a personal and vital relation to Jesus Christ, that the soul becomes at once surrendered to him and obedient to his authority; and all truth and duty are thereafter seen through Christ, and life in all its conduct and temper is lived for Christ's sake. "Ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" is the sum and substance of the Christian life.

"But," you say, "you have not said a word about a creed in that definition. Doesn't a person have to have a creed in order to become a Christian? Doesn't he have to say, I believe this, and I believe that, and I believe the other? Surely you do not mean to say a man does not need to have a creed in order to become a Christian?" I mean exactly that. He not only does not need to have a creed in order to become a Christian, but he must become a Christian before he can have a correct creed. No man's perspective of truth can be right until he gets it from Christ; he cannot see truth aright until he sees it through Christ. Personal, vital relation to Christ, therefore, must come first. Loyalty to Christ, single and unswerving, is the only thing that will enable one to formulate a correct creed.

"But," you say, "you did not say anything about

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keeping the commandments. Surely you do not mean to teach that one can be saved without keeping the commandments." Yes, I mean to say that very thing. " By the deeds of the law shall no man be justified in God's sight." Before Jesus would command he said, " Lovest thou me? " And " if ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." You not only do not need to keep commandments in order to become a Christian, but you must become a Christian before you can keep commandments. Personal, vital relation to Jesus, loving loyalty to Jesus, must come first, then commandment-keeping is in order.

" But," you say, " you did not bring in the ordinances in that definition. I know you believe a person must be baptized in order to become a Christian, don't you? " No, I believe exactly the opposite of that, that is, that one must become a Christian before he can be scripturally baptized. Baptism symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It declares to the world that the one submitting to it has trusted his soul's salvation to the once dead but now risen Christ. To have baptism, therefore, before one is identified with Christ in his death, is to have a cart ahead of a horse and an ordinance without any meaning. An unsaved baptized man is a baptized lost sinner. " If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest " be baptized. So one not only does not need to be baptized in order to become a Christian, but must become a Christian in order to be baptized.

" But," once more you say, " in that definition you said nothing about joining the church. Don't you insist that people join the church in order to become Christians? " No, not I. At least I never have yet, and I think I never shall. The church is for people who have

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already become Christians. "And there were added to the church daily such as were being saved," is the way it occurred under the ministry of the apostles. One not only does not have to join the church in order to become a Christian, but he must become a Christian before he can join the church Scripturally. Of all incongruities, this is the chief—an unsaved person in the church. That is the tragedy of Christendom today, and the source of a church's impotence.

So, my friends, salvation is not a question of creed, or dogma, or commandment, or ordinance, or a church; it is a matter of personal, experimental relation to Jesus Christ. Personal attachment to Jesus, loving loyalty to Jesus settles everything. We do not come to Christ through creed, or commandment, or ordinance; we come to creed, commandment, and ordinance through Christ. Not creed, commandment, and ordinance, and then Christ; but Christ first, then creed, commandment, and ordinance. Not through the church to Christ, but through Christ to the church.

Severity is not my nature. But I must be severe enough to say, that the ecclesiastical sin of this and every other age is the sin of putting something other than Jesus between a bewildered penitent soul and the forgiving God. When a sinner is penitent and inquires the way to be saved, he needs to see nothing save what the disciples saw on the Mount of Transfiguration, "Jesus only."

Take the case of Saul as he rode, proud, arrogant Pharisee that he was, on his way to Damascus. With a heart full of bitterness and hands full of authority to torment Christians, he was suddenly shot through with

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conviction for sin. I would not undertake to fix the exact moment of his conversion, but I do know that when he got himself together his first intelligent word was, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” I do know that on his way he met the Saviour and came into such a personal, experimental relation to him that he was from that moment and ever afterward obedient to his authority and became the living echo of his personality. He came to a creed, and to baptism, and to commandments, and to church-membership; but he came to Christ first. It was so with Andrew, and Peter, and Philip, and Nathaniel, and Magdalene, and the woman at the well, and a host of others, who looked to Jesus and were healed of their soul disorder, and there was never a day afterward but they would have died for him.

II

I wish to use the phrase, second, to define *the sphere of Christian service*. I heard a great layman say not long ago in a remarkable address, that his conception of the Christian life was something like this; said he: “My conception of the Christian life is, that when I accepted salvation at the hands of Jesus, I virtually gave Jesus my note covering everything I had in this world. I said in that note, for value received I promise to give to Jesus my Saviour my money, my land, my gifts, my hands, my feet, my brains, my all. Jesus looked at that note and turned it over, saying he did not need it, but endorsed it to the needs and causes that he loves. So,” said the layman, “my understanding is, that what I owed Jesus as a debt of gratitude for saving me, I now

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owe to the causes with which he is identified, and what I would have done for him had he needed it, I must now do for these."

I have heard no preacher excel that layman at stating this truth. What are the things with which Christ has identified himself as his causes in this world? What is it that we can serve for Jesus' sake and be counted as worthy as if we had served Jesus? Turn and read the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. The hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the imprisoned, the orphaned, the sick—all these are set out before us as the incarnation of Christ's needs. These represent him here and now, and will represent him at the last judgment.

How have you treated these? How have you treated the institutions and the movements that were born to care for all these? I do not care how loud your profession, or how vociferously you shout, or how long your prayers, if you have mistreated these, you would mistreat the Lord if he were here. Jesus Christ walked this earth identified with the sorrowing and the suffering and the fallen of humanity, and if we love him, we will have to prove it by loving and serving these. In that judgment scene those who neglected these were told to "Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Jesus is represented in the cry of every orphan child, and in the tragedy of every sin-enslaved human soul.

Jesus is also identified with his church. "For his body's sake, which is the church." So closely is Jesus identified with his church that he calls the church his body. Your body is not your real self, but it is the instrument through which your real self expresses itself.

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You are a soul apart from your body, but your soul cannot do much in this world apart from your body. Your body is the organ with which your soul serves its day and generation. In the same sense your church, not some invisible, intangible something, but the church made up of breathing men and women redeemed by the blood of Christ to which you belong, is the instrument Christ has chosen to live in and through which to express himself in your community and around the world. It is the channel through which his pity and compassion are to pass to a wasted world.

Is that your conception of your church? Has it occurred to you that your church affords you about the largest opportunity you have for showing your devotion to your Lord? Do you not take mistreatment to your body as mistreatment to you? Do you really believe that you can make the world believe that you are a Christian and a follower of the lowly Nazarene, when you treat his body—his church if you please—like a stepchild and impoverish its life with your stinginess and your indifference? To be cruel to his church is to be cruel to him.

“Oh,” but you say, “didn’t you say that the church did not save people, that the church is not Christianity?” Exactly that I said, and I stick to it. But that is not the question. A virile Christianity never existed apart from churches. Where churches are languid and weak, every religious and moral obligation is ignored and the world rots in sin. Without strong and conquering churches Christ can do no mighty works anywhere. His church is his body, the organ of his pity and love. Ignore it, and you render him helpless. Crucify Christ’s church

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on the cross of your frigid indifference, impair its power and freeze it into impotence with your neglect, and what evidence can you offer before any court that you love Christ? "For his body's sake, which is the church."

In my youth I met and married a little brown-eyed woman in Mississippi who seemed to have a very pronounced, innate aversion for a dog. I have always had a little of the sporting element in me, so I wanted to start to housekeeping with a good bird-dog. But the little brown-eyed woman said, "No, we will not." I argued the question for a while, but seemed to lose out in the argument, so I dropped it.

A few years passed, and in the providence of God a dear little boy came into our home to live. He grew to the age when a boy loves a dog and would give his kingdom for a dog. And if I had it all to do over I would insist that my boy's mother let him have a half dozen dogs if he wanted them. So at about eight years of age my boy went to the same battle with his mother in which I had lost. I can say to every father that if you have not learned that your little boy can get things from his mother that her husband can't get, you are not so wise as I am. And it isn't that she loves her boy better; it's just different.

I watched my boy make his gallant fight. He had located a dog, and all he wanted was his mother's consent to bring him home. They were on the porch, and I sat in the study where my deep interest was not observed. I saw the boy was winning. I saw his mother's innate rebellion giving away before her adoring love for her only lad. They made definite terms, and then down the steps and out the gate and down the street that boy

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went just as fast as his little naked shanks would carry him; and in about twenty minutes he came back with the ugliest bob-tailed pup I ever saw. I said to myself, not out loud, "If we are going to have a dog, I wish we had one that looked like something." But I didn't interfere, and haven't to this day.

But the interesting part of this dog story is, that my boy's mother, born to hate a dog, began to love that one. She gave him some of the best that went on our table, and when her little boy was away she cared for that dog as if he had been a member of the family. Do you understand this? I do. My boy and his mother and his dog gave me a parable. Here is a world that is sinful, and base, and unworthy. Here is a church that is full of sorry specimens of humanity, most of them very imperfect. But my innate aversion to these is not to control my action. I must see them through the eyes of Jesus who loved them and gave himself for them. If I cannot love and serve them for their own sake, then I must do it for Jesus' sake.

"Ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. . . For his body's sake which is the church."

VI

REGENERATION VERSUS REFORMATION

" Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."—Titus 3 : 5.

I consider no revival complete, or its work permanent, without the preaching of the fundamental doctrines of grace. Too much preaching done in revivals is of the jelly-fish type—no body, no backbone to it. Many brethren preach in revival times as if they had never heard if there be any such thing as doctrine. If we would make kingdom-builders out of our converts, we must preach doctrine.

Regeneration refers to that condition of heart, or rather change of heart which must obtain before one can enter the kingdom of heaven, here or hereafter. I speak of the subject under three simple divisions: The nature of it, the necessity for it, and the mystery of it.

I

The Nature of Regeneration

I am not at all able to tell what regeneration is, but I can tell you some things that regeneration does. Jesus did not attempt to define it, but he gave in his teachings the fine fruits of it. Regeneration changes our affections. It causes us to love things we once hated, and hate things we once loved. The blind man could

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give no explanation of his healing. All he could say was, "Once I was blind, now I see." That was enough. It is enough for the awakened and forgiven sinner to be able to say, "Blinded by sin, I rebelled against the law of a holy God; quickened by his spirit, I saw my rebellion and came back to his love."

This means much, because the things we love determine what we will be and where we will go when we die. Life gravitates toward the things one loves, and character solidifies in the direction of the things loved. Tell me what you love, what your affinities are, what your pleasures and pastimes are, and I will tell you what you are. Every base human being will go down to hell by the working of a law as inevitable as that which makes a rock released fall toward the center of the earth. The affections must be changed.

Regeneration also changes our judgment. Sin is not sane. To do wrong is always bad judgment. In the long run the sinner always plays the fool. The carnal mind cannot see this, but the regenerated mind does. I have seen the sinner after he had listened to the message and felt its appeal, turn and walk away from it, as if to say, "I will risk all my eternal welfare and my future happiness upon the mere flimsy chance that maybe I will have another opportunity to heed it at a better time." I have seen the same sinner, now convicted and quickened, listen to the same preacher, and when the opportunity was given, go straight forward and give his hand in token of surrender, as if to say: "The risk is too great; I cannot take it longer. I here and now abandon my life and my all to Jesus." What was the difference? This, with other things: His judg-

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ment was changed. Regeneration makes saner thinking and safer decisions.

Regeneration, once more, changes our temper. The grace of God in the heart sweetens and sanctifies the disposition. I do not subscribe at all to the doctrine of "sinless perfection." No man who knows the baseness of the human heart, and the immaculate perfection and holiness of the law of God, can ever do that. But it must be said, brethren, that if a man's heart is filled with all manner of bile and bickering and bitterness it is belying Christ to say he is a Christian. Regeneration builds the mind and spirit of Christ into the heart and life.

II

The Necessity of Regeneration

I speak secondly of *the necessity of regeneration*. Jesus, in his memorable conversation with Nicodemus, urged the necessity of it with his irrepressible "Ye must be born again." There is no appeal from his word. This necessity is seen first in the innate depravity of the human heart. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." "The carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be." According to the Bible, the heart of man is a hidden magazine of evil possibilities. His whole nature is out of harmony with God, sin riots in his blood and holds high carnival in his brain. Do not call it "total depravity" unless you want to. Whether it is total or not, every faculty of his being, memory, judgment, affections, and all have been touched and tarnished by sin. This is entirely too manifest to deny. Tomorrow, crimes and

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frauds and cruelties and inhumanities will spring up, for which there is absolutely no explanation if man is not depraved. A little boy the other day, a normal child, shot and killed his brother. A father, a few days ago, embezzled the funds of a bank and broke the heart of his little girl, and she died of the grief. A boy sixteen years old slew a whole family, a mother and five children, without an adequate cause. These things are going on daily all around us. Half the people of the world today are flying at each other's throats in fierce anger. I challenge the man who denies the doctrine of human depravity to give a satisfactory explanation of these things.

King David remarked once that he could not remember the time when he was not conscious of the bias of his heart to do wrong. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." A little child is not a sinner by practise, but it has the innate capacity for all the riot of sin. Paul, the Christ-hater, the red-handed murderer, was once a soft little babe lying in his mother's arms; and all the murderous passions that drove him mad and blood-thirsty toward Damascus were sleeping in him when he was an infant in guileless innocence.

You may go out yonder to the hills and turn over one of those boulders and find a nest of little rattlesnakes no larger than your little finger. Take one of those little snakes, beautiful and harmless as they seem to be, and give him the best environment possible, and he will grow into a venomous serpent to kill you the first time you cross his path. You may take that little snake to paradise and feed it on heavenly manna, and give it

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angels for companions, and when it has time to grow and develop what is in it, it will become a snake and thrust its poisonous fangs into the veins of an archangel. Unless you curb it and conquer it by the grace of God, there is a sleeping demon in every child. And I am not preaching "infant damnation" either. I am happy to believe that God has made provision in the atonement for children that have not reached the age of responsibility. But man is hopelessly ruined by sin. The whole heart is sick, and the head is faint. Jesus offers the only remedy for man in the washing of regeneration. This may be an unpleasant gospel to some, but we must preach it, or be traitors to our Lord.

Again, the necessity for regeneration as seen in what the scientists are pleased to call *the law of the eternal fitness of things*. If God is inherently holy and pure, and men are by nature and practise depraved, then by the law of the eternal fitness of things such a God and such men will never come together in peace until one or the other is changed. Either God will have to be dragged down and accommodated in his nature to the level of men, or men will have to be lifted up and renovated and given a nature that will feel at home in the presence of God.

There is hardly a more interesting study in nature than the skill with which God has adapted everything in the world to its surroundings. The fish, made for the sea, has its fins. The bird, made for the air, has its wings. The thistle, made to float in the air, has its sails. God follows this same great law in the spiritual kingdom. Heaven is the eternal environment of a saved soul. If a human soul, now depraved and sordid by

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nature, be not changed so as to find the environment of heaven congenial, then heaven would be hell to that soul.

I sat down once in a barber-shop waiting for my turn. A man came in and sat down and began telling an obscene story, so vulgar that it would have made an imp of the bottomless pit shudder. The proprietor of the shop was my friend, and I protested to him that there were gentleman present who were entitled to protection against such slime. The man quietly picked up his hat and walked out. Now by what process of reasoning can you argue that this man, vile and vulgar, would find in heaven a congenial home, when he was unhappy in the presence of people who hated vulgarity here? He was driven out of that shop, not by any arbitrary force, but by the inexorable law and choice of his own base nature; and if you were to put a man like that in heaven, he would by the working of the same law leave heaven, if he had to break over its battlements to get out.

You have heard some talk about universal salvation, but I tell you, my friends, universal salvation is universal nonsense. To say that God will at last lose himself in a gush of sentiment, and open the gates of mercy indiscriminately to all alike, and take all men, saint and sinner, good and bad, to heaven, regardless of moral condition, caste or character, is the height of all absurdity. Such a proposition is neither Scriptural, scientific, or reasonable. Heaven is where God is; it is where the angels and all the holiest and best that are gone from earth are; and the same law that drove the vulgar man out of the shop that day, would drive him away from the face of a holy God.

An eagle is born for the rare atmosphere around the

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crags of the mountains. A mole is born for the dark caverns under the earth. Just as well take the mole that burrows in the earth to the top of the mountain where the eagle lives and tell him to be happy, as to expect a vile, voluptuous man, with his heart unrenovated by the washing of the Spirit, to be happy in heaven. Jesus therefore spoke scientific truth, philosophical truth, as well as spiritual truth, when he said, " Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." You may deride the doctrine if you will. You may join all the churches in Christendom. You may shout hosannas until the angels are charmed. You may do penance, count beads, inflict tortures, and say prayers. You may be baptized, be ordained, and preach the gospel; but if you go to your deathbed without a change of heart, your eternal doom is sealed.

III

The Mystery of Regeneration

Let me speak in conclusion of *the mystery of regeneration*. The average man is ready to admit the logic of the doctrine of regeneration, but he follows the course of Nicodemus and stumbles at the mystery of it. Jesus argued the question with Nicodemus by analogy and by illustration. He told him first that regeneration was like the wind, in that it could be seen and detected, but not understood. In nature we live and move and have our being in mystery, and we do not demand an explanation or an understanding. Why can we not do this in religion? I sit down three times a day and eat a good square meal. I do this without understanding the

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unfathomable laws of physical digestion, or how it is that the food I eat makes blood, bone, and muscle, and brings back my spent and wasted strength. Suppose I waited until I understood it all before I began to eat; I would never eat another meal.

You lie down at night and relax your body and go to sleep; but where do you go? What is sleep? How do we sleep? Who understands sleep? Not the scientists; for they frankly say it is the profoundest mystery known to man. But you sleep. Your conscious personality slips away, and is gone for eight hours, and then it comes back and you are awake again. Do you understand it? No. Then why do you sleep? Come now, and use the same common sense in religion that you will have to use here before you move out of your seat tonight; for you cannot get up and walk out of this house without submitting to as great a mystery as when you take Christ into your heart.

No illustration was ever more luminous than the one Jesus used with Nicodemus. This man was familiar with Jewish history. It was as if Jesus had said to him: "Nicodemus, you remember when your people were bitten by the fiery serpents in the wilderness journey; you remember how they came to Moses in their utter distress, and how Moses interceded for them, and how God answered with the instruction about the brazen serpent and the command to look upon it and be cured of the bite." And I imagine I can hear Nicodemus answer and say, "Yes, teacher, all that is authentic Jewish history, and I doubt not that it all occurred just as it is recorded in the Bible."

Then said Jesus, if you believe that, then "As Moses

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lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It is not understanding, my friend; it is faith. It was the look of faith that saved them, and the look of faith saves now. Never mind about understanding. Sin is ruining you. What you need is to look and live. There is LIFE for a look at the Crucified One.

VII

THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD EVIL

" Six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."—Proverbs 6 : 16-19.

" Abhor that which is evil."—Romans 12 : 9.

The Christian's attitude toward evil is an all-important theme. Our purity as a people depends upon our attitude toward evil. Our progress in the religious life and in morals depends upon it. We can get nowhere in this world without the right attitude toward evil. It is therefore fundamentally important that we settle once and for all this great question as to what attitude God's people shall assume toward the giant evils that walk abroad in the world. There are three possible attitudes that we may assume: Indulgence, indifference, and indignation.

I

The Attitude of Indulgence

There is first, *the attitude of indulgence*. We may indulge in evil, either because we are bad and want to enjoy sin for a season, or because we are weak and cannot resist evil. In either case we apologize for it. There are

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people who go so far as to say that there is some good to be obtained from indulgence in evil. They contend that knowledge gained by indulgence equips one to be helpful to his fellow men who are in the way of sin. They urge that we touch the seamy side of life, handle at least the fringes of all that is bad, in order to get the experience that will enable us to help the man who is down. They hold up the ministry of men like John B. Gough and Sam Jones, men who ran the gamut of the worst sins and came back to bless their comrades in crime.

As an all-sufficient answer to this, at first plausible theory, I cite to you the white and spotless life of the Son of God. He knew life in all its breadth and scope, and was best equipped to help men, yet he never indulged. His best equipment was that he was holy, harmless, and undefiled; that "he was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Indulgence, from whatever motive, weakens and tarnishes and defiles. As to John B. Gough and Sam Jones, it may be said that their power lay, not in the fact that they had indulged, but in the fact that God had endowed them with the strange thing called genius, and gave them a double portion of his Spirit. And it may be further said that though powerful men they were, they no doubt would have been more powerful still, could they, like their Lord, have looked the world in the face and said, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Indulgence never fitted any man to be more useful.

There is an old adage that we learned when we were children: "Knowledge is power." Well, that is only half the truth, and a half-truth is often equivalent to a

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lie. To say that food is strength, is only true when the food is wholesome food. There are foods that will breed germs, disease, and death if taken into the body. Knowledge is power, if it be wholesome knowledge. There is knowledge which to possess will weaken the moral nature, break down courage, and the exposition of which would cover you with shame. Such knowledge is weakness and not strength, and a Christian must be careful to steer clear of it.

It was He who knew no taint of evil, whom no sin ever touched, who in his incarnate innocence drove the hucksters out of the temple, avenging the outrage against his Father's house. The most potent and powerful ministry that can be given to this world is the ministry backed by a life whose heart is clean, and whose thoughts and deeds are pure.

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure;
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.

No, my friends, no indulgence in wrong-doing of any kind ever equipped a man for better service in this world. The best of all weapons is the word of God, and next to that is a clean life. Hezekiah Butterworth has given us this argument in that beautiful poem "The Bird with a Broken Wing":

I walked in the woodland meadows,
Where sweetly the thrushes sing,
And found on a bed of mosses
A bird with a broken wing.
I healed its wing, and each morning

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It sang its old sweet strain,
But the bird with a broken pinion,
Never soared as high again.

I found a young life broken
By sin's seductive art,
And touched with a Christlike pity,
I took him to my heart.
He lived with a nobler purpose,
And struggled not in vain,
But the life that sin had stricken,
Never soared as high again.

But the bird with a broken pinion,
Kept another from the snare,
And the life that sin had stricken,
Raised another from despair.
Each loss has its compensation,
There's healing from each pain,
But the bird with a broken pinion,
Never soared as high again.

II

The Attitude of Indifference

There is, in the second place, *the attitude of indifference*. There are people who say: "O well, I am not responsible for the evil around me; I did not bring it here, and I'll therefore have nothing to do with it." About the only repulsion that some people ever feel toward evil is to turn their eyes away from all the ugly sights in the world, and then imagine they are refined.

A member of our legislature, so a man told me, was asked the other day how he stood on the liquor question. "Oh," said he, "I have no interest in it. I do

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not drink myself. If you vote it out it is all right with me; if you leave it, it's all right. I'm absolutely indifferent on the question." The old Smith's Grammar that I studied in school gave a gender that the grammars now do not give; the "neuter gender." It meant "neither male nor female." That definition fits this little thing I'm speaking of now, "neither male nor female," just an "it." Isn't it grotesque that he should be a member of anybody's legislature? When will we cease to be afflicted with his kind? Neither this, nor that; just here to take up room, that's all.

Now if evil were an honorable thing, this attitude might do. But evil is an intruder, an invader, a usurper of the throne of God and the rights of men. To be indifferent is to be cowardly, and to leave the race to become victims at last to the enemy's foul deceit. As well talk about our beloved country now being indifferent to the enemy that is invading our soil, destroying our property, trespassing upon our inalienable rights, and murdering our citizens, as to talk about being indifferent to sin. It is impossible to be indifferent toward evil and be right. There must be no condoning, no compromising, no apologizing for evil. There is no neutral ground between right and wrong. The sharp edge of the razor with which I shave my face is broader than the common ground between right and wrong. No man can please Christ, and not be known thoroughly, and definitely, and everywhere, as an uncompromising foe to evil. God save you the reproach when men shall ever quibble for one serious moment as to which side of a great moral question you are on. There is but one side for you to be on, and that is the right side.

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III

The Attitude of Indignation

There is, third, the attitude of indignation. I fear there is much false sentiment abroad in the land on this subject. To hate evil is as much a Christian virtue as to love good. We are commanded to "abhor evil." There is hardly a stronger word in the language. We are commanded to "be angry." To be sure the precaution is added, "and sin not," but the precaution is not intended to annul the command. To be angry sometimes is the only proper thing to do.

On one occasion Moses became angry at Dathan and Abiram for their terrible sin; and God justified Moses' anger, and opened the earth and caused it to swallow these arrogant sinners up, with their families. Elijah became angered once at the prophets of Baal, and God approved his anger and sent a veritable holocaust of destruction to wipe them off the face of the earth. Pity the soul that could look on and witness what Moses and Elijah did, and not be indignant.

The Bible speaks of the "the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God." We are told that "Jesus looked with anger" on malice and hypocrisy. Before the hucksters in the temple the Son of God walked like an enraged lion to scourge them from desecrating his Father's house. The last picture that we have of him is the picture of his coming to earth again, the incarnation this time of the wrath of God, to unseal the volcanoes of his indignation on an impenitent world. In the very nature of the case, therefore, Christianity must have a place for the hatred of evil. Neither God nor

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man can conserve the good, without antagonizing the evil. The God who will conserve righteousness and reward the good, will also make himself a terror to evil and evildoers. To stand in the presence of a giant evil, like the liquor traffic, that curses religion, and slanders preachers, and murders men, and rapes women, and shuts the door of hope in the face of youth, and not burn with righteous indignation, is to deny your kinship with the skies. God hates hands that shed innocent blood. Are we to be less indignant than he is?

For fifty years we have been trying in this country to build a public conscience on the question of the social evil. We have bombarded this sin with the word of God and the arguments of social justice. And yet in the face of our efforts and the plain teaching of the Holy Bible, there has grown up in our midst a double standard of morals, that allows the "red lights" to burn in cities of America, and permits men to soil their bodies and their souls in vile indulgence. Now the war has come and revealed to us the enormity of this social cancer. Our race is about to be swamped with impurity, and our young men are inefficient and unable to defend us in a world war, because of the enervating and debilitating effects of social sin. Is it not time for somebody to burn with righteous anger? Is it not time for people who want to be decent and respected to stop apologizing for this thing? If somebody does not stand in the breach and cry, this sin will doom us forever.

It is said that Joshua Leavitt, the founder and editor of the *New York Independent*, was once visited in his office by a man who had been his bosom friend, but who had alienated himself by going off with "free-lovism."

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He sat and talked pleasantly to his former friend for a while, and then began pouring out to him a stream of the vices that attended his cult. Leavitt heard him until he was filled with holy revulsion, and rising from his seat, stood above him ablaze with righteous wrath and said: "Sir, I abhor you! I abhor you! Get out of my presence, and show me your face no more!" Was he right? Yes. That was righteous scorn, and the act was a religious act.

How can we, my brethren, when we look back upon the havoc that evil has wrought in the world, upon the hearts it has broken, the homes it has destroyed, the hopes it has blasted, the virtues it has blighted, the suffering and anguish it has brought to women and little children, and the immortal souls it has damned forever—how can we, looking back at it all, have anything but feelings of blazing anger at sin? "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Let us, here and now, pledge our allegiance anew to this same holy task of destroying sin.

To loath it in our bosom,
And scorn it with our eye,
Hate it with our latest breath,
And fight it till we die.

VIII

EQUALITY IN BURDEN-BEARING

"I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: but that there may be equality."—2 Corinthians 8 : 13, 14.

I

It is evident that Paul believed firmly in *the democracy of privilege in the churches*. All men are not equal in gifts, or talent, or ability; but all men are equal before the law of God and man. I have read and reread Dr. E. Y. Mullins' book "Axioms of Religion," and if I ever lacked anything of being a thorough democrat religiously, that book supplied the lack.

The fundamental axiom in religion is, that all men have an equal right to direct access to God, without the intervention of priest or prelate. No fair religionist will deny this. If it be true, then it follows, as the night follows the day, that all men are entitled to equal privileges in the church. Equality before God makes men equal in their ecclesiastical standing in the church.

This does not mean that all men possess equal natural ability, or that one man will fill a given office in a church as well as another. Diversities of gifts, offices, and administrations are clearly taught in the New Testament. But it does mean that there are no favored sons by law of primacy; it does mean that there are no dynasties by the law of hereditary lordship established in the churches.

The New Testament church, whatever else it is, is a spiritual brotherhood of equals. In private grievances

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among the members, Christ urged personal adjustment as brothers with brothers, instead of by judicial decision. In all church quarrels, the local church, assisted by invited counselors, was the only court resorted to. Jesus never established any court higher than a local church congregation. "One is your master, and all ye are brethren," is the last word on the subject.

But if Paul believed in the democracy of privilege, he also believed in *the democracy of responsibility in the churches*. He is on record as receiving a slave into a New Testament church, but he charged that slave with his responsibility for the welfare of that church as readily as he did the master who owned him. One of the sweetest and most beautiful letters that came from Paul's hands is the letter to Philemon entreating him for this converted slave Onesimus.

In the Scripture before us, Paul is dealing with the matter of extra burden that had fallen upon the Corinthian church. Heavy persecutions came to the Christians at Jerusalem, their property was confiscated, and they were reduced to poverty, and in many cases left penniless. This imposed the duty of collections upon the other churches to take care of these unfortunate Christians. Paul is urging that this burden be equally distributed, that the missionary collection be taken so that it would not ease up on some and press down on others, but that responsibility might be equally and equitably shared.

II

Now upon this general principle laid down by Paul, let us make some observations. First, *the Bible every-*

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where supports this doctrine of the distribution of burdens. In the days when God had few capable leaders, his servant Moses tottered under the heavy load he was carrying. He grew impatient and went to God with this prayer: "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. Kill me out of thy hand, and let me not see my wretchedness." Now wasn't this a prayer for a good man like Moses to make? But remember the load he was carrying. Three million people were unloading their responsibilities on him. To be made the pack-horse for other people's burdens kills. It kills by inches; it takes the heart out of a man. Moses was just human, that was all.

But did God answer that prayer? Yes; here is the answer: "Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee and put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not alone." Seventy men were made to carry the load that one man had been carrying, and Israel went on to success. If this had not been done, there would have been a dead leader in the camp, and the world would have been poorer without Moses.

And this leads me to say that this tragedy is being repeated today. We are killing our leaders. If there is a judgment for denominations, some of them are going to have to answer the charge of murder. We unload on the men we have appointed to lead us until no human strength can bear what we put on them. Under these crushing burdens sometimes the breaking-point is reached, and the tragedy is ended. I went once to bury a faithful conscientious pastor. One of his deacons said

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to me: "They may tell you that this disease or that killed him; but I tell you that he died of a broken heart." It is my candid conviction that Dr. R. J. Willingham, one of the greatest mission secretaries our people ever had, was a victim to the heart-crushing health-destroying burdens that his brethren who loved him had unloaded on him. God save us from the sin of killing our leaders!

Then you will remember that Jesus did not undertake to redeem Palestine and the East unassisted. He rolled the burden of the work first upon twelve men, then upon seventy, then upon one hundred and twenty, then upon every believer with their successors. The apostles would not allow themselves to be crushed by getting under the temporal burdens of the church at Jerusalem, but called to their assistance men whom God had raised up and fitted and redeemed, and charged them with a part of the responsibility.

I tell you, my brethren, right here is our lamentable weakness—we have too few burden-bearers, and too many of our people are eased. We have not built the spirit and principle of cooperation into our church life. Capitalists have learned how to organize money, incorporate talent, distribute responsibility, and work commercial miracles out of consolidation. Industry has mastered the art of combination, so that by the touching of a button labor leaders can in a few hours get a response to a distress call from millions of men. And yet here we are in the kingdom of God, doing business at the same old stand of letting a few people carry all the loads, bear all the burdens, and pay all the bills. It is our shame, and if we do not do better we are doomed.

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If we could somehow get all our forces amalgamated into a compact body, each one of our members feeling solemnly responsible for the spiritual and material welfare of our church, we could blow a bugle blast that would raise the dead. A little boy passed my house the other day who has only been a member of our church a few months. He had gotten the letter that I sent out to all the members urging them to be present next Sunday for the mission collection. Seeing me on the porch he said, "Hello, Brother Andrews; I got your letter about the mission collection, and I'll be there next Sunday with my money." Ah, he's the kind that great church-members are made of. He will be a great layman some day, standing by the pastor under the responsibilities of a great church. Brethren, let's teach our people that they do not come into the church to ride, but to get under the loads and *count one*.

I take it also that Paul meant that *burden-bearing is the part and lot of God's people*. The Bible pronounces its woes upon the people who are at ease in Zion. There are always those who not only seem willing to have, but who seek ease in the church life. They are more than willing that others should bear all the burdens, if indeed they think there ought to be any burdens at all. Every business concern has its burdens. Every bank, store, office, mill, factory, corporation, all have their burdens. What sort of a business could you have if your associates in business would not bear their share of the burdens? Do you like a shirker in business? Every family has its burdens. What sort of a family life would you have if the members of it would not share the burdens? Do you like a shirker in the family? You

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show me a family where the many members of it are constantly unloading on the few, and I'll show you a tragedy. A church has its burdens. A church without burdens is a cumberer of the ground; it has no place in this world. I do not know of a church today that is worth its room, that is not bearing heavy burdens. Do you like a shirker in a church? Well, I don't, and I do not believe the Lord does.

There is nothing that will kill a church quicker than for a few of the members to have to carry all the loads. I know a church today that has the heart and life and spirit crushed out of it, because a few leaders are left to pay all the bills, make up all the collections, and save all the lost. These men have grown tired, their enthusiasm is chilled, their hopes are crushed, and they have quit their job. They feel outraged, imposed upon, discouraged. Who wouldn't? This same thing is blighting the life of many a church today.

Then there are denominational burdens to be borne. Every church and pastor is somewhat the creature of the denomination back of them. The denomination must be built if the churches would have conquering spirit. I know some churches that manage somehow to shirk all denominational burdens. The colleges are built and endowed without them; the orphans are fed without them; the sick in the sanitariums are healed without them; the mission campaigns are carried to success without them; the denominational papers are maintained without them. I wonder what they think a church is for.

I know some preachers who somehow manage to escape all denominational burdens. They lie out at the general meetings when collections are being taken; they decline

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to answer calls to sacrifice and service for the denomination; they will not pay railroad fare and hotel bills to attend board meetings. They always look sleek and well groomed, but I would rather be nailed up in my coffin and buried alive, than to stand in their shoes at the judgment.

One day when I was blue because some brethren had failed us in a denominational undertaking in our county Association, I said to my wife: "When I die, and a man comes to conduct my funeral, tell him the least said about me personally the better. Let him talk about the grace of God that can save such as I am. But do tell him to say one thing; tell him to say, 'Here lies a man who never shirked when denominational burdens were to be borne, and who never left his brethren in the lurch when loads were to be carried.' This is all I care to have said. God deliver my name from the contempt of being a shirker after I am gone." Maybe I ought not to have said it, but in saying it I was true to my deepest feeling.

Once more we are reminded that equality in burden-bearing is not a question of equal portions, but a question of ability—"according as God has prospered you." What might be a burden in the way of giving with some unfortunate man or some poor widow in this church, would not be a burden for me at all. A lodge is a fit place for a man to pay according to his age or the amount of benefit he is to receive, but a church is not. Here it is with a willing mind and "according as God has prospered you."

In another pastorate somewhere, it matters not now where, I was preparing the congregation for a collection

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for missions the next Sunday. I said: "Brethren, we will take our offering next Sunday. I hope you will all be here. Our board is asking us for so much. Our membership is 500. Certainly we ought not to give less than we are asked for, but more if possible."

One of my deacons, a shrewd man, many deacons are, came to me after the congregation was dismissed and said: "Pastor, I think you are right. I'm in sympathy with the collection. I think we ought to give what we are asked for. I have made the calculation, and it is just fifty cents per member for our church, and here is my fifty cents." If this deacon was worth five cents he was worth fifty thousand dollars, next to the richest man in the church. I felt as if I had had the hose turned on me. It ruined my collection. Think you that that is equality? There is a judgment-day for men like that.

In a little poem, "My Lord and I," Robert Davis sketches a judgment scene:

"I worked for men," my Lord will say,
When we meet at the end of the King's highway;
"I walked with the beggar along the road,
I kissed the bondsman stung by the goad,
I bore my half of the porter's load.
And what did you do," my Lord will say,
"As you traveled along the King's highway?"

"I made life sweet," my Lord will say,
When we meet at the end of the King's highway;
"I smoothed the path when the thorns annoy,
I gave the mother back her boy,
I mended the children's broken toy.
And what did you do," my Lord will say,
When we meet at the end of the King's highway.

IX

AN OLD TESTAMENT BEATITUDE

“Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.”—Psalm 84 : 5, 6.

A beatitude is an ideal of life that is supposed to bring happiness to those who live up to it. We commonly think of the beatitudes as belonging to the New Testament, but they are found in the Old Testament as well. Both the Old and the New Testaments hang out these pictures before us to charm and attract us.

The world also has its beatitudes. There is scarcely a man living who does not believe that men and women can be happy. There may be one here and there who will say, “Who will show us any good?” who look on their fellows as pursuing bubbles and chasing delusions, and who would say with the pessimistic preacher, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

But we may thank God these are few. Most people hold on through life to ideals which they think will make them happy. “Blessed are the rich,” say some; and then they bend every energy to become rich, hoping that when they do, they will be supremely happy. “Blessed are the honored,” say others, and then they strive to achieve honors, in the hope that when they do they will be perfectly happy; and on and on they go following their ideals.

But here is a man who says, “Blessed is the man

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whatever his outward circumstances, whether conditions be stormy or peaceful, whether he be exalted or oppressed, whether his path be one of struggle or ease, blessed is the man whose strength is in God, in whose heart are the ways of them, who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well, the rain also filleth the pools.” Let us look at this happy man as he is described here. In the picture we will find the fundamental elements that will contribute to human happiness.

I

First of all he is *a man whose religion is his strong point in life*. His strength is in God, and God’s ways are in his heart. Religion is the element in which he lives, and religion pervades and subdues everything else in his life. Now it is quite possible for a man’s religion to be his weakest point. He may have a wrong religion, and being wrong it may be his weakness. That which is false can never possess real strength. Or he may become fanatical with his religion, and fanaticism is always weakness. A man whom I never saw wrote me a letter once and told me the day that our Lord was coming back to earth, and solemnly warned me to warn the people. A man the other day stood before a congregation and drank poison to prove that faith was superior to the laws of nature. He died of course. Now I take it that men like these are least thought of where they are best known. There is no strength in fanaticism. A man may have so little religion and place so little emphasis on it, that it makes no distinct mark upon his life. He is known for almost everything else better than he is

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known as a Christian. His religion is his weakness instead of his strength. That which God intended should be at the summit of his life has been brought down to the base.

It is a great pity for the kingdom when a man's religion holds any other than the first place in his life. With many a man nominally Christian, business is his strong point and holds first place in his life. He lives, and moves, and has his being in business—is up to his chin in it from morning till night. He pits business against all the claims of religion, and all religious obligations are annulled by the obligations of business. He may be known far and wide as a business man, but as a Christian he has no reputation at home or abroad.

This man forgets that a man may be a great business man, and still be greater as a Christian—such a man as John Wanamaker, of Philadelphia, or the great shoe man, Mr. Brown of St. Louis. Mr. Wanamaker, the prince of American merchants, started life poor and worked his way to the top, and famous as he was as a business man, he is known farther and better as a great Christian man than for anything else. Mr. Brown built his great fortune in the shoe business, but his motto given out to all his employees and to the world was “Christ first, family second, shoes third.” His chief distinction was that he was a devout Christian.

Now the Bible does not disparage business; it rather encourages it. But there is one place for a man's religion to hold in his life, and that is first place. A man may be strong in many legitimate ways in life, and yet weak in the supreme realm. The thing for which he is made and which should crown him, has somehow be-

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come the last thing he emphasizes, and his strength has become his weakness.

With others politics is their strong point. They forget that a man may be a great statesman, and at the same time be greater still as a Christian. Mr. Gladstone was the greatest statesman of modern times, and yet he is known better for his Christian integrity and his devotion to religious activities. With the weight of big national affairs upon him, he had time to write religious books, be a punctual attendant at his church, and minister to the sick and needy.

The standing reproach on Christianity is that Christ's men push their religion off in a corner and give it no conspicuous place in their lives. Christianity has little to give in the way of happiness to those who so treat it. Put Christ where he belongs, on the throne in your life, take all your bearings from him, and all the infinite deeps of his love and grace will be yours to draw from.

II

The second thing about this happy man is that he is *a man to whom God is a blessed reality*. One of the weakest things in our modern life is the lack of the sense of the presence of God. We hear a good deal about the loss of the sense of sin, and there is room for much to be said on the subject. We live in a shameless and unblushing age. The most dastardly indecencies are practised in the open with unabashed face and without remorse of conscience. But no man loses the sense of sin until he first loses the sense of God. When a man ceases to live daily in the light of "Thou God seest me," he

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will blush at nothing he does. To walk constantly as in the veritable presence of the Almighty, conscious of his abhorrence of sin, of his love of the good, of his rewards and punishments, is the best safeguard against doing wrong.

We look at worried people, depressed people, low-spirited people, discouraged people, faithless people—what is the matter with the world anyway? Why is it not happier, and stronger, and more hopeful? Because it has no God in its thinking, no sense of his love, no trust in his providence. The weakening, destructive heresy of this age is the loss of the sense of God. Infidelity in the hearts of God's people is hurting the kingdom infinitely worse than the infidelity on the outside.

God is available and accessible from all places, at all times, and under all circumstances. In the wrangling mart, in the crowded street, on the bloody battlefield, to the woman about her household duties, to the man engulfed in life's cares, everywhere, anywhere, we may carry the sense of God. And what otherwise might be sordid and distasteful, may become hallowed and sacred by his presence.

I have one picture left me in memory's hall of my mother that I treasure above all others, and that I will carry with me to my dying day. She was an invalid for the last nine years of her life. During those days of invalidism she went here and there about her duties, when she was able to go, singing and trusting as if her hand were in the hand of the Unseen. She had a voice which I believe an angel would have coveted. I can hear her now singing that dear old hymn:

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How tedious and tasteless the hours,
When Jesus no longer I see;
Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers,
Have all lost their sweetness to me.
The midsummer sun shines but dim,
The fields strive in vain to look gay;
But when I am happy in him,
December's as pleasant as May.

And as she sang that song, her face was transfigured, the friction and irritation went out of her life, and a peace possessed her heart that was as tranquil as the dream of an angel. I would not take the world for seeing my mother, under the most trying circumstances of life, live in the practise of the presence of God.

And if we would live in the realization of the presence of God, we must give attention to spiritual culture. How can a person who is too tired to pray at night and too hurried to pray in the morning, and who lives daily and hourly in the whirl of this speeding age, giving no time to the worship of God's house and the study of his word, get any vision of God or any adequate sense of his love? You cannot keep up a human friendship without cultivating it; and much more is it impossible to keep up friendship with God.

III

The third thing to notice about this blessed man, is *the results of his labors as he passes through the world.* "Passing through the Valley of Baca, he makes a well." This is a figurative expression, and signifies the man who pioneers a country, digging wells, blazing paths, founding institutions, building civilization, doing the things

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that are to make the world a fit place for the generations that are to follow.

What a beautiful symbol this is of a Christian. A Christian is not a dreamy, impractical man. He is here to do things, to pioneer the country, to make the crooked ways straight for other feet, to change the face of earth, to uproot and overturn wrongs, to build institutions, to leave monuments behind him telling coming generations that he lived and did his bit to make the world better than when he found it. He is here to convert the valleys of weeping into valleys of rejoicing.

For one thing the world will always admire the ancient Egyptians. They lived with a determination so to impress themselves upon civilization that the world would never grow old enough to forget them. We stand in amazement before their imperishable monuments. I sat in Central Park in New York City and rested my body on the base of the Egyptian obelisk that was presented to this country in 1881 by the king of Egypt. Here rising seventy feet in the air is a marble shaft so hard that ordinary sculptor's tools will make no impression upon it. This obelisk was quarried and set up near Cairo in the sixteenth century B. C. It stood there when Rameses II, the Pharaoh of the Bible, plagued the children of Israel. In all probability Moses read its hieroglyphs.

As I sat there in the presence of such antiquity, I said to the party with whom I was traveling, "I will take off my hat in reverence to the people who thought in such terms of immortality, and who chiseled their dreams of it in such imperishable molds." After all, the curse of Christian living today is that God's people do not live

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for the future. We should live to dig wells at which tired travelers a thousand years hence will slake their thirst and thank God that we lived.

After all, the best test of a person's life is the work he is doing to change the world and make it a more tolerable place for people to live in. If we are doing nothing to change the valley of weeping, to lessen the woes and miseries of the race, to dry their tears and brighten their lives; if we are simply living to get what we can out of life, enjoy its luxuries and run after its gold with the avidity of misers, we fool no one but ourselves. Blind and obtuse as this world is, it knows perfectly well that nothing is more alien to the spirit and mind of Christ than selfishness. There will come a time when if a man has lived for these things, they will fall away from him and leave him defenceless and naked, with nothing but his shriveled soul to face a just and an avenging God.

Death is already casting its shadow before some of us. What is it that quiets you as you look upon its possible contingencies? Is your strength in God? Is your religion the conspicuous thing in your life? Or are you putting Christ in a corner? Have you left springs of blessing along your way at which the thirsty are drinking, and will drink after you are gone, and bless God for your life? If not, the time to do it is now.

X

ONESIPHORUS, THE HELP-BRINGER

"The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain."—2 Timothy 1 : 16.

There is no more interesting study than the study of the men of the Bible whose names are only briefly mentioned, sometimes but a verse or a sentence, but how significant in every case the mention. Like a wave upon the sea, they rise but for a moment, and then sink back forever into the indistinguishable waters. They always linger long enough, however, to point us some helpful lessons. There is nothing superfluous in the Bible. Everything that is there is there for a purpose.

Here are the circumstances under which this man's name is mentioned: Paul was in prison at Rome. This letter was written from that Roman prison. For several years he had lived and labored at Ephesus, and had established and maintained for these years a strong Christian church there. Among his converts was this man Onesiphorus, evidently a man of noble parts. Between him and Paul there had grown up a fast friendship. This of itself was to his credit, for a man who would be Paul's friend was bound to be a good man.

His friendship stood the test, for when Paul was cast into prison and his cause seemingly was in defeat, this man makes his way to Rome, perhaps on business, but more likely on purpose to visit Paul. At any rate he

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searches him out, finds out where he is and goes in and sits with him in his dungeon. He bears him tidings from his brethren at Ephesus, tells him how they love him still, and in every way refreshes the tired old veteran of many battles. This was done not once, but repeatedly.

Now Paul is sending his message by Timothy to the people at Ephesus, and he cannot forget Onesiphorus. I can imagine that a glow of heaven comes into his face, and a choke of emotion into his voice, as he acknowledges the kindly ministry of this good man. This is practically all we know about Onesiphorus, but it is enough. Let us study some of the lessons that his life presents:

I

The first one that I mention is, that he was *a man true to his name*. His name in the original language meant "Help-bringer." You know in the olden times there was usually some significance attached to a name. This man's name signified that he would be one who would bring help to others, and this was the object of his visit to Paul in prison.

Paul says of him, "He oft refreshed me." The word properly means "to cool," "to let in a refreshing breeze." Like a breath of sweet, cool, fresh air to a fever-ridden patient, or a draft of cool spring water to a tired and dusty traveler, so were the visits of this man Onesiphorus to the imprisoned Paul in his confinement. Oh, what a blessed man he was! What would this sick and sorrowing world do without his kind?

This man's ministry is a symbol of the ministry of every man who bears Christ's name to this world. We

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have a name, a significant name; we are called "Christians." To be sure the name was first given in derision, but it is a good name, and was given because those to whom it was first applied acted like Christ. Jesus, if he was anything, was a help-bringer. He was the true Onesiphorus to this imprisoned world. He brought more help than all the rest that have lived in it besides.

A Christian ought to be true to his name. His ministry to this sin-imprisoned world ought to bring help to it wherever he touches it. His life and his presence ought to be like a draft of fresh air to the sick, or a drink of cool water to the tired and thirsty. The test of all that we do or say, ought to be, "Is it helpful?" If not, then we should not speak the word; if not, then we should not indulge the criticism; if not, then we should not do the deed. There are many things we will be tempted to do, and which we will do almost before we know it, that will hurt and not help, unless we apply the test, "Will it help?"

If you are tempted to reveal a tale
Some one has told you about another,
Let it pass before you speak
Three gates of gold:
First, Is it true? second, Is it helpful? third, Is it kind?
In your mind give the truthful answer.
And if, to reach your lips at last,
It passes these gateways three,
Then you may tell the tale
And fear not what the result of speech may be.

In a world imprisoned by sin and death, surrounded with the sick and the dying, the heart-broken and the oppressed, why will any Christian refuse to live a help-

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ful life? To be sour, and cynical, and indifferent, when by every roadside there is some one to help, is a sin that will be our undoing at the last judgment.

II

The second lesson that this man's life points, is that he manifested *the true spirit of Christian brotherliness*. This was in the days of the Roman empire. Men were subjects held together by the grip of imperial power. The world knew nothing of brotherhood. Christianity introduced that first. It was through faith in a common Saviour that men were made brothers in the profound and intimate sense. In Christ Jesus there was neither barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free. All outward relationships were overswept and overcome in the mighty tidal one of unity in Christ.

Nothing more astonished the heathen, and nothing was more incomprehensible to them, than the way the early Christians loved each other. "Behold," they said, "how these Christians love one another." They called one another brethren, and this beautiful fraternal word was no empty speech. They lived it every day, served each other, commended each other and prayed for each other.

Now Onesiphorus came to Paul clad in the beauty of this brotherhood. He was not merely the official carrier of a contribution, but a man with a heart at one with Paul's heart, and throbbing with the most Christly sympathy. And you can see how like a stream of sunshine on a dark day the coming of such a man must have been to the tired apostle.

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This leads me to say that unless a church is a brotherhood, a company of men and women whose sympathies and interests are blended and intertwined, and whose hearts are interlaced in love, it is a burlesque to call it a church. Here is Peter's idea of a church: "Be ye all likeminded, compassionate, loving as brothers." Here is John's idea of a church: "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Here is Paul's idea of a church: "Concerning brotherly love ye have no need that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." Here is Christ's idea of a church: "One is your master, and all ye are brethren."

Strange as you may think of it, a man does not prove himself a Christian by loving God, but by loving his fellow men. The first and the inevitable fruit of a regenerated heart is love for the brethren. This is the world's craving today. They tell us that the people are all moving to the cities and towns. Maybe they are, but why? Likely for several reasons, but for none more than this: they want fellowship, elbow touch, brotherhood. They tell us the men are neglecting the churches and joining the lodges. Maybe they are, but why? Possibly for several reasons, but for none more than this, they crave human fellowship. Men act brotherly in the lodge. Men do not live by bread alone, they live by human fellowship. And the church that does not offer and illustrate fellowship, and practise Christian brotherhood, is doomed to a blasted life. You had as well try to recuperate a drowning man on a floating iceberg, or convert the world on sermons written with the point of an icicle, as to try to warm the world's heart in a church without fellowship.

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Guard it as your dearest treasure. Your church had better not be, than be without it.

You remember the origin of that great hymn, "Blest Be the Tie that Binds"? Doctor Gill, the great Baptist scholar of London, had died. The great church had set about to call a pastor. They knew their fallen pastor's equal did not live, so they decided to call a growing young man and wait and grow them another pastor. They called Dr. John Fawcett, a growing young man in a small town in England. Doctor Fawcett had resigned, preached his farewell sermon, and seven wagons stood loading his household goods to carry him to London. His people were heart-broken and unwilling for him to go. They gathered, men and women and little children, and hung around him with pleading agony. Finally, overwhelmed with their sorrow, Doctor Fawcett and his wife sat down on the boxes and wept like children. She said, "Oh, John, I cannot bear this," and he said: "Nor can I bear it; unload the wagons, and place the things back where they were," and to commemorate that event, he sat down and wrote these lines:

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers,
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one.
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear;

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And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain,
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.

I believe that every church ought to close the prayer-meeting each Wednesday evening with singing that hymn; sing it until we sing its blessed sentiment into the life of the people.

III

The third lesson that comes from this good man's life, is that he performed his ministry of helpfulness in time. Many people fail of a helpful ministry in life, not because they do not mean to do well, but because they are always a little too late. Paul was a prisoner at Rome, and the sentence of death was hanging over him. Suppose Onesiphorus had waited several days or some weeks, as most people do, to show his love for this man. One day he might have heard that Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, the man he had loved so dearly for what he had done for him, had been beheaded; that the Roman guard had walked to the prison, taken him in chains down the famous Roman road to the executioner's block, and there the axman's blade was raised and, glistening for a moment in the sun, fell upon the apostle's neck, and his head rolled off in the dust.

Then Onesiphorus would have said: "O my God! I intended to go and see him, and put my hand in his and my heart alongside his heart, and tell him how I loved

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him. I intended to cheer his lonely life, and help him to be a man in defeat, but it is too late now—forever too late.”

My brethren, here is one of our serious troubles in Christian service—we are never on time. The element of timeliness is an important matter in many Christian duties. Done at the right time, there is a blessing in them; but delayed, they are as well not done at all. The time to put your strength alongside your brother’s weakness and help him bear his load, is when the struggle is on. It will be too late to offer help when the danger to which he is exposed has done its deadly work. You had as well sleep on then.

One of my members said to me one day: “ Won’t you go and talk to Mr. —? A great disaster has come into his life. He is depressed, and his family are very uneasy for fear he will do a rash thing. He is not a Christian, and I happen to know that he thinks well of you. I believe you can save him.” His word appealed to me, and I said, “ Yes, I will see him, and do what I can for him.” I fully meant to do it, and while I waited for the opportunity to turn up, as we say, two days later a man passed my door and said, “ Did you hear what happened a bit ago? ” I said, “ No, what is it? ” And then he told a story that haunts me to this day: “ Mr. — went home at the noon hour to dinner, and after eating his meal, went up-stairs and into his room, and slammed the door. The muffled crack of the revolver was heard, and when the family rushed to the room, there he lay weltering in his blood, a suicide.”

This was the man I had been asked to help, and whom I fully intended to help. It haunts me sometimes like a

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nightmare, and will to my dying day. I have never been able to get away from the thought that I will meet that man at the judgment. My sin was not bad intentions, but delay. Delay may sometimes be fatal. Mine was. I hope yours may never be.

If you have a friend worth loving,
Love him, yes, and let him know
You love him, ere life's evening
Tinge his brow with sunset glow.
Why should kind words ne'er be said
Of a friend till he is dead?

If you see the hot tears falling,
From a brother's eyes,
Share them, and by sharing,
Own your kinship with the skies.
Why should any one be glad,
When a brother's heart is sad?

If we did all the good we mean to do, this world would be a paradise to live in. Here is the brief record of this modest man. That he is modest and obscure is all the more comforting to us. We are all mediocre people. What he did, any of us can do. God grant that his mantle may fall on us. The night is fast approaching when no man can work. Do the good your hands find to do, and do it today.

XI

DIOTREPHEΣ, THE AUTOCRAT

"I wrote unto the church: but Diotrepheς, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not."—3 John 9.

This is a second sermon in the series on "Obscure Men of the Bible." The first was on "Onesiphorus, The Help-bringer," the man with a helpful ministry, the man whose hand was ever extended to his needy fellow men, and who was ever on the lookout for opportunities for doing good. In striking contrast with him, Diotrepheς is a man vain, irritable, and obnoxious; with a disposition to rule or ruin; more concerned for his own preeminence in a fleeting hour than to be sure he stood with the good that endures.

Here are the circumstances under which his name is mentioned; John was acting in the capacity of a mission secretary, and was commanding certain brethren for the help they had given in bringing the gospel to the Gentiles. By preaching the gospel to the heathen at their own expense they had become fellow helpers to the truth. In this connection he paid his respects to this man Diotrepheς, who because of his love for being preeminent, had hindered this work with his objections and his rejection of the men who were doing it. It is said he prated against them with words, and cast them out of the church, refusing to have fellowship with those who wanted to spread the gospel and carry forward the missionary enterprise.

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I

In the study of this man's life, I raise the question, first, of one's right to make his religion obnoxious, and himself unpleasant among his brethren. I know that strict adherence to duty and principle will often offend, and I am not objecting to that. Most of the offense, however, that is given by Christians is not on account of the show of the sterner Christian traits, but on account of the knottiness and the crabbedness of those who wear Christ's name, but have not his spirit. An hour's talk with some Christians would prejudice an unbeliever thoroughly against our religion. The Christian is called a "living epistle" of Christ, and the world ought to be able to read Christ in him, just as he reads Christ in the Bible.

There is entirely too much lemon and too little sugar in the composition of some people. They manage to be good enough to command respect, but not attractive enough to win love. There are people not a few who are scrupulously honest and conscientious, who rigidly practise whatsoever things are just and honorable and true and pure, but they are disagreeable in every way, never do a pleasant deed, and nobody specially loves them. Their presence makes an ungenial atmosphere, children are afraid to speak to them, and like an irritable bumblebee, to touch them is to get stung. They go on growling their way to heaven, but they carry nobody with them.

This is more than a mistake—it is a sin. As a soldier has no right to wet his powder or blunt his sword when he goes into battle, so a Christian has no right to make his religion offensive when he might make it attractive.

Diotrephes, The Autocrat

To win souls is said to be the highest wisdom, but how is one to win souls, unless he makes himself winsome?

II

Look now at the one trait that gave this man his peculiar character—*he loved to have preeminence*. He was a vain, selfish fellow, ambitious for leadership, a man of the rule-or-ruin type. Rather than yield his opinions, he would embroil a whole church with strife, and embitter a community with hate. A witty American writer has given us a fascinating sketch of an “Autocrat at the Breakfast Table,” but here is a sketch not quite so fascinating of an autocrat in a church. This man wants the Decalogue and his wishes to be of equal binding force on other people’s conscience. He is the friend of none who disagree with him. Cromwell said, “There is wisdom in yielding,” but dear Brother Diotrephes doesn’t think so. He possesses the temper that Shakespeare takes off in these lines:

I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark.

Such a man is a misfortunate and a misfit in a church—especially in a Baptist church—for two reasons: First, he is set for “running the church,” and a church was never intended to be run by any one man, no matter how good and wise he may be. A church cannot be run by anybody, except to destruction. A church is a family, and a family cannot be run. You can run a hotel, you can run an engine, you can run an automobile, but you cannot run a family or a church; and wherever

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it is tried there is a tragedy. A church can be fed on the divine Word, and in the atmosphere of the Holy Spirit, it can be led; but to run it, is to wreck it.

The second reason is that a New Testament church is a pure democracy, and it is contrary to the genius of democracy for one man to rule. When we come to take membership in a New Testament church, we merge our opinions and our judgment with that of others, and afterward we act both as individuals and in masses. Nowhere else in all the world is the action of the common mind so exalted as in a New Testament church. A man who will not respect and abide by the voice of a majority, ought never to take membership in a Baptist church.

The Baptist principle proceeds on the assumption that the sense of truth resides in the common mind, and the common mind properly enlightened and patiently taught, will come nearer arriving at the truth than the individual mind. The common mind winnows opinions, and like a sieve, separates error from truth. All the people are wiser than some of the people. The temple of Minerva and the works of Phidias were the highest perfection of art in Greece, and they were planned not to suit the taste of the tyrants, but to please the common people. It is the verdict of the people, and not the critics, that makes great music. The Italians, among the greatest musicians in the world, appeal to the populace for a verdict on their music.

When the story of "Paul and Virginia," a universal literary favorite, was first written, a circle of literary critics heard it read in Paris, and condemned it as unworthy of publication; but the author appealed from their decision to the common people, and the judgment

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of the children of Europe and all the world reversed their decision. When Demosthenes was asked how he acquired his wonderful incisive style of speech, he replied, "By standing in the market-places and listening to the country people as they brought their produce to sell."

On this principle we have developed democracy, and according to all the lights before us now, the best government in the world is the government that rests on all the people. The New Testament was two thousand years in advance of the world's thinking on this subject. Jesus uttered the last word on its organization when he said, "One is your Master, and all ye are brethren." For autocrats, plutocrats, bureaucrats, and aristocrats there is no place in a New Testament church. A New Testament church is a brotherhood of equals, or it is nothing. Brother Diotrephes joined the wrong church. I suppose if he lived today he could join one better suited to his tastes. We have them. But there was only one kind in his day.

III

Do not understand me to mean that there is no room for leadership in a New Testament democracy. That is one of the serious problems of organized Christianity—*the right sort of leadership*. And leadership is often mistaken for ambition to rule. I went once to be pastor of a church, and was told soon after getting on the ground that the church belonged to Mr. —, and if I could succeed in getting along with this brother, whose name is omitted, I would be safe; otherwise, woe be unto

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me. Well, I had not been there long, when rain set in, and it rained a week. The whole earth was full of water, and so was the basement of the church, and it was doing serious damage. I heard a noise one morning, and looked out over at the church and saw this brother of whom I had been told to beware, with rubber boots on, and a pump, working like a Turk to get the water out of the basement and save the church. I did not see the brother who accused him of "bossing," and in a pastorate of several years, I never saw him on such occasions. He would have waited to call a conference and authorize a committee. I said to myself concerning this brother, "If that's the way you boss, you have my consent." Thank God for men who will take initiative and lead. I never knew this man to refuse to bow gracefully to the will of the majority.

The New Testament exalts leadership. In its day a few men and women set the pace for thinking and doing in the churches, just as they do today. If a man is capable of leading the people in their thinking, and able to lead them in the grace of liberality, and does not, he is responsible to God as a derelict in duty. Many a church has latent power enough to turn the world around about it upside down, if its leaders knew and felt their responsibility.

But the Diotrephes kind hold a church down; they stifle its democracy, and choke and paralyze its activities. Their domineering spirit makes timid brethren afraid, keeps the younger members in the background, and hinders progress. Their contentiousness embitters the life of the church, and drives outsiders away from it. If there is one thing the outside world will let alone, it

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is a contentious church. I know a church that lost its preeminence in a great town by one year of bitter contentiousness between men who knew not how to yield gracefully. I have often had to yield my opinion in matters in my church, and in the course of time it has turned out in nine cases out of ten that I was wrong. I rather think now I would prefer to have the way of the majority of my church, if the church has had a fair chance, than to have my own way. All of the people are wiser than some of the people.

A Baptist deacon, honored and loved, once gave a large sum of money for a college building. He had his ideas about where the building ought to be, and the committee had theirs, and the ideas didn't agree. He thought his money ought to rule, got angry, told the committee to count him out, and picked up his hat and went home. The redeeming thing about this man, however, was that he had religion. He fell to thinking, a fine thing to do, and became ashamed of himself, and after a restless night went back to the committee and said: "Brethren, I made a fool of myself; forgive me; take the building and put it where you want it; I've no more to say." Wasn't that fine? If his will had prevailed, the building would have been an eye-sore, for he was wrong, but he was man enough to make open acknowledgment of it afterward.

This story points the only remedy for the autocrat in the church—a willingness to surrender gracefully when he cannot have his way. George MacDonald has written a little poem on submission, that has in it the only spirit that will cure the self-centered man. Three verses of it run thus:

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I said, Let me walk in the fields;
He said, Nay, walk in the town;
I said, There are no flowers there;
He said, No flowers, but a crown.

I said, But the air is thick,
And fogs are veiling the sun;
He answered, Yet souls are sick,
And souls in the dark undone.

Then into his hand went mine,
And into my heart came he,
And I walk in the light divine,
The path I had feared to see.

Good man, perhaps Diotrephes was, subject of the saving grace of God; but unloving and unlovely, he has left a blot on his name forever. He is known, not for his virtues, but for his vices. He has gone on his way to heaven, I trust, and we shall be glad to meet him there, but he was shunned on earth, and went home empty-handed. May the blunder be our solemn warning.

XII

CASTING SHADOWS; OR, UNCONSCIOUS INFLUENCE

"Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them."—Acts 5 : 15.

The apostle Peter is here represented as being so filled with curative power that when they brought to him great multitudes of diseased and suffering people, at the touch of his hands they were healed. And then when the crowd became so great that all could not receive the touch of his hands they said, "If but his shadow may fall on us we shall be healed," and they were.

I have selected this verse, not so much to discuss the historic fact or significance of it, but to draw from it the lesson of casting shadows, or unconscious influence.

I

There are two kinds of influence that attend every life, *the conscious and the unconscious*. Every life performs a double ministry—the purposed and intended, and the unpurposed and the unplanned. A man lives, we will say, fifty years in a community, and dies. There will be two classes of results left behind him when he is gone. There will be the buildings he has erected, the business he has organized and set going, the improvements he has made in the community, the wealth he has accumulated, and many other tangible things. These

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were the things he lived to do, the things he thought about and wrought out in his life.

But while he was doing these things, he was leaving behind him another class of results by the words he spoke in his daily intercourse with men and the spirit that was in them, by the manners that silently interpreted his life to others, by a thousand little wayside ministries which were unconsciously performed, without design or intention. It is the part of his life that the biographer will never write, and that columns of statistics and added results will never tell. Every life has this double history, and leaves this double record behind.

Now, if you have studied life's values you will know that the element in human life which counts for most is this subtle thing which we call personal influence. There is something in a man's life more powerful than money, or speech, or activity—a spiritual force which flows silently out from the life and touches and strangely affects other lives. It is to a man what fragrance is to a flower, what light is to a lamp; it is a part of himself that reaches out and beyond himself. It is his shadow, and every life is casting this unconscious shadow.

II

This shadow life is inevitable and never fails. A man may fail in his purposed plans, in the things he intends to do, but he will never fail to cast his shadow of personal influence. Whether he will or not, the subtle power is being released from his life by day and by night.

A man goes home from business at night, and summing up the work of the day he says: "Well, I have

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done nothing today. I failed to meet the men I intended to meet, and things did not turn out as I had hoped. I have accomplished nothing today." Yes, he did accomplish something. When he went into his store in the morning he met John, a clerk in the firm. John was down that morning. He had left a very sick child at home, and he felt it would not get well. But his employer met him with a smile, and inquired anxiously about his child, and expressed the hope that it would get well: John went home feeling better that night, feeling as if his child would get well, and it did get well. The bookkeeper was also in trouble that day. His accounts were in a tangle, and he had worried himself into a fever over it. But the proprietor spoke kindly to him, and said: "Stay with it, it will come out all right; go home and sleep over it, then try it again." So he did, and it did come out all right.

Later, these two men were talking together, and one said to the other: "Now isn't it a comfort to work for a man that is kind to you and interested in you like that? It makes a fellow want to be a better man." Accomplished nothing! Why, certainly he accomplished something. He failed in what he intended to do, but in spite of that, he cast his shadow of personal influence over the entire day.

A mother worked hard all day in her home trying to keep her house in order, preparing comforts for her family, and watching over her children. At evening she says: "Well, I've worked hard all day and accomplished nothing. I've just gone the same old rounds of duties; so many garments made or mended; so many floors swept; so many dishes washed; just the same old round,

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and nothing done." Oh, the monotony of a woman's life! It is no wonder to me that so many of them go to the insane asylums. The monotony of a woman's life would run the strongest man distracted. It is not the weight of their work, but the sameness of it that kills. Middle C on the instrument is one of the sweetest tones in the world, but if you hammer that tone on my ears thirty minutes you will give me nervous prostration.

This mother said she accomplished nothing. Yes, she did. This morning when her careworn husband left the house, his business bordering on collapse, he left with the music of her voice ringing in his ear and the flush of her warm kiss fresh upon his lips. He labored hard to get hold of broken threads of business, and at night he felt better, and the outlook was brighter. At every turn she had bright smiles for her children and pleasant greeting for her friends. Even the book-agent at the door she met with a smile—a thing hard to do when a woman is busy. The day passed, filled only with the earthly and commonplace, but she had unconsciously performed a ministry of blessing. Her life was wasting toil, and the day was full of trouble, and nothing was what she wanted it to be, but mostly unknown to her, she had cast a healing shadow over it all.

That is life. Whether you want to or not, whether you intend it or not, in spite of you, your shadow goes out day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to heal or to hurt, to bless or to blight all that you touch in this world.

One day a little babe opened his eyes to this world, eyes he had never opened before; parted his lips, lips he had never parted before, and cried for help. None were

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present but the mother, the father, the doctor, and the nurse. Little babe lived, and laughed and played, and cooed one brief year; and one day the doctor came back looking grave. Mother's voice was hushed in tearful silence, and little babe, as if tired, wanted to be lifted in mother's arms and sung to sleep, and it was. But the eyes closed, and opened no more, and little babe went to sleep in the arms of God.

He never spoke, he never wrought, he never achieved; but he made tracks the traffic of the world will never put out. His little shadow will be traced through the mother's and father's hearts on and on down to the last day they live, and then on and on through others and yet others, until Gabriel's trumpet calls the world to judgment. Never a human being breathed the breath of life that did not leave a shadow.

I was in the office of a business man the other day. This man is a member of another congregation, but he honors me with his friendship. His eyes moistened with tears, as he said to me, "Preacher, would you excuse me if I show you a letter I received from one of the boys in the house this morning?" The name signed was folded under, and I was permitted to read the letter. After I had read it I asked the privilege of copying one paragraph of it, and here it is:

Probably you have never thought of the impression you are making on the men who are working with you, but I want to tell you if the other boys are absorbing as much of you as I am, you ought to have a place with this bunch of preachers in our town. I have never gone away from one of our business meetings without feeling a greater liking for you, and without finding myself determining to work harder, and strive to be a better man.

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This business man said: "I was never so surprised in my life. I did not know I was exerting any special influence on the young man. It stirs my very soul with a sense of my responsibility." Yes, this silent, radiating personal influence is inevitable. You may fail to do what you intend to do, but you will never fail to cast your shadow. It will fall on the people in your office, in your store, in your bank; it will fall on the people you meet on the streets, it will fall on your family, it will fall on the world that you know. Not a life that you touch will ever escape it.

III

The shadow life, the personal influence, will be of the same kind as the substance—the life itself. You cannot be one sort of a man and expect a different influence. What you are at heart will determine the kind of influence you are to wield, and the shadow life will be an index to the real life. You can tell a horse or a house by the shadow they cast. You can tell a real man by the shadow he casts.

The scientists are telling us now that thoughts and musical tones have color, that this thought is one color, and that thought is another color; that one tone is one color, another tone is another color, and so on. Well, I confess I do not know much about that; but I do know that your shadow is the same color of your life, that you cannot be one thing and your influence something else.

Here is a selfish man; but before you know he is selfish, sit down in his presence. He has not yet uttered a word. But you feel him. He chills and exhausts you.

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He has the quality of a sponge to draw and suck the happiness out of your heart. Self-centered people always make you shiver before they have said a word. A human being makes an atmosphere, and the atmosphere will tell what he is. You may close your mouth and never say a word, and yet all thoughtful people will "get your number."

A little woman said to me recently: "I can't bear that man; I am miserable in his presence." "What has he done to you?" I said. "Not a thing that I know of." "What have you against him?" "I don't know. I simply know I can't bear him. I had as soon be in the presence of a snake."

What was the matter? Was the little woman right? Yes. I knew the man, and if rumors were half true, he was worse than a snake. She did not know it, except that she instinctively sensed him. The poison of his shadow went with him. Some people carry a chill around with them, and leave a damp, clammy feeling on all behind them.

Then there are others who always have a large stock of good cheer, and it matters not how dark the night, or how cold the day, they warm you, and cheer you, and thaw you out, and discover you, and inspire you for your work.

That is our business in this world. People usually have good stuff in them, but they need discovering. A hone makes a razor do its work better; a grindstone sharpens an ax. What are we for, but to sharpen the wits and inspire the heart of every workman by the way, and set him to doing his work better? Blessed are the people who are inspirers of hope and courage in man-

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kind. I believe there are rich treasures laid up in heaven for the apostles of sunshine.

I know a little poem that sets out the two songs that every heart may sing, and every one of us is singing one or the other of these songs:

A singer sang a song of tears,
And the great world listened and wept;
For he sang of the hopes of the fleeting years
And the sorrows which the dead past kept.
And the world, that in anguish its burdens bore,
Went on, sadder than ever before.

A singer sang a song of cheer,
And the great world listened and smiled;
For he sang of the love of the Father dear,
And the trust of a little child.
And the world, that before had forgotten to pray,
Looked up, and went singing along its way.

It is not yours to sing a dirge, but a song of hope. Sing it, sing it loud; sing it long; sing it sweet. The heart of the world is heavy just now, and it will hear you and hear you gladly.

IV

May I speak briefly now in conclusion of *our responsibility for this shadow life?* I speak with all possible solemnity when I say, that we are responsible for the shadow that we cast, for the atmosphere that we make, for the temperament that we carry around with us. If we fill the circle we move in with malign influences, and the world we live in with gloom and twilight, there is a judgment for us.

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It ought to be impossible for a suicide to occur under normal conditions in a Christian community. Christian people ought to make an atmosphere in which everybody would want to live, and want to live better. Jesus said, “I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly.” It haunts me like a nightmare that here in the community where I live, where we boast of our fine churches and our cultured congregations, where the dominant element in our population is nominally Christian—that here on an average of every twelve months somebody grows tired of life, the light of hope goes out, and suicide is the result. These churches, and this culture, and all that religion treasures, were set here to prevent that sort of thing. It is our standing reproach that it should ever occur.

What kind of a shadow are you casting today, my brother? By the side of this question, death itself in point of solemnity is not worthy to be compared. What does it matter, if my heart is right, where, or when, or how I die? If I had my preference, of course it would be in the presence of my loved ones, where those who love me best can hold my hand and watch my failing pulse. But what does it matter? If I fall among strangers, or am buried on the sea, or my body is consumed in the martyr’s flames, I go straight to the Father’s house and am just as well off. What does it matter?

But oh, it does matter, and it matters much what kind of a shadow I leave behind me; whether I shall leave one that will heal, and help ailing humanity, and point tired travelers to the city of God; or one that will poison and blight every good thing, and bar the way to heaven

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for those I've had the chance to bless. Only as we take Christ into our hearts to renovate the fountain from which all conduct proceeds, can we settle this solemn question.

Howard Arnold Walter said this was his creed; may it be a part of ours:

I would be true, for there are those who trust me,
I would be pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave, for there is much to dare;
I would be friend of all—the poor, the friendless,
I would be giving, and forget the gift;
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift.

XIII

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE GOSPEL MINISTRY¹

“ Called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.”—
Romans 1 : 1.

“ Take heed to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath
made you overseers.”—*Acts 20 : 28.*

The Bible is a holy book, inbreathed of God by the Holy Ghost. The presence of the Holy Spirit in giving us the Bible, puts this book separate and apart by itself, and leaves the distance of infinity between it and any other and all other books. There is the same difference between the Bible and other books that there is between Christ Jesus and other men.

If this proposition is true, then it must follow that the Holy Spirit has something to do with selecting and directing the man who is set in the world to interpret and proclaim this divinely inbreathed book to the people. It shall be my purpose in this sermon to try to say in part at least just what the Holy Spirit does for the gospel preacher.

I

The Holy Spirit has to do, first, *with putting a man into the gospel ministry.* The gospel ministry is not a profession; it is a holy calling, a divine designation to a holy office. According to the Bible, only those came

¹ Delivered before Pastors and Laymen's Conference, Baptist General Convention of Texas.

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to this office who had been chosen and set apart to it by an ineradicable religious experience.

The prophet of the olden times was somewhat analogous to the gospel minister. This prophet was never permitted to intrude upon this sacred place unbidden of God. These men were uniformly brought to their work by a deep and spectacular spiritual experience. In the case of Moses, it was the "burning bush," an experience that was remembered by him in all his time to come. With Isaiah, it was the vision of an empty throne at the death of Uzziah. With Amos, it was the mysterious voice and the beckoning hand as he followed his flock in the pastures of Tekoa. With Samuel, it was the voice of God in childhood calling him to be the reformer of an evil age.

The fact is, well nigh all of them relate their experience, a sufficient number at least to establish the rule. Moreover, God's curse was on the man who would dare to come to this office undesigned by the Holy One. "The prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, shall die." A strong presumption is thus created in favor of the same rule in the New Testament.

Paul was such a designated man, "separated unto the gospel of God." After his conversion, he continued in prayer and in the acquirement of knowledge concerning Christ, until such a time as God called the church at Antioch to set him apart to his life-work. "There were in the church at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, and as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

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It seems certain also that Paul recognizes this rule for others whom he taught. To the elders at Ephesus he said, "Take heed to the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers." Of himself he said, "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel."

The whole trend of Scripture is in favor of a divinely designated ministry. Other men enter the professions because they have tastes and aptitudes for them; but here is a man who is bound by a terrible sense of moral oughtness, feels he is incurring moral guilt if he does not; conscience obliges him to preach. It is a good time for us to reaffirm our time-honored belief in the doctrine of a God-called ministry. When we forsake this doctrine, we shall have an imbeciled ministry and a secularized Christianity.

We must not forget, either, that the Holy Spirit exercises great care in the kind of a man he selects for the gospel ministry. He is no ordinary man who is sketched in Paul's instruction to Timothy. He is a man with a superior order of piety, holding a sound faith in the form of sound words, having adequate mental capacity with "aptness to teach," ruling well in his own home, and of unquestionable reputation among those who know him best. He must be a man above the common herd, or he is unfit.

II

The Holy Spirit has to do also *with leading the gospel minister into his special work*. He led Philip from Samaria toward the south to where God had prepared the heart of an Ethiopian eunuch to receive the word

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and be baptized. He led Peter to the house of Cornelius where a waiting congregation of Gentiles were ready for the gospel, and their conversion changed the course of human history. He led Paul to Europe, instead of Asia, to preach the gospel to our forebears, and thereby gave the gospel as a trust to the most virile race on earth. The book of Acts is a history of the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and might be appropriately called "The Acts of the Holy Spirit," instead of the "Acts of the Apostles."

This thought ought to be very assuring to God's gospel preacher. Under all the weariness to which the flesh is heir, for the preacher to know that he is where God wants him to be, is enough. In the midst of all life's distractions, to be able to place his hand upon his heart, and say, "I am here, not of my own choosing, but because the Holy Spirit has led me here," is a vantage-ground from which he can see the silver lining to every cloud. And on the ground where such a minister labors, being sent of the Holy Spirit, heaven and earth and hell will be affected by his ministry.

The thought ought to bring us to recognize also that no settling of a pastor over one of Christ's churches pleases him unless the Holy Spirit has been allowed to lead in the whole matter. One of these churches left shepherdless, ought to cast all diplomatic methods to the winds, and look in faith and prayer to the Holy Spirit for guidance. This does not mean that there is any harm in writing a letter to commend a worthy brother, but it does condemn much that occurs today in the name of spiritual leadership.

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III

With the doctrine of the Holy Spirit's leadership in relation to the gospel ministry thus set forth, I wish to draw some conclusions. If the Holy Spirit is thus related to the gospel ministry, then his presence in the preparation and delivery of sermons is *imperatively essential to effective gospel preaching*. Our Lord himself did not answer the call to preach the gospel to the poor, liberty to the captives, the opening of prison to the bound, or to announce the acceptable year of the Lord, until he waited beneath the open heavens and received the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Before he went under the burden of his ministry he could say, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, and he hath anointed me to preach."

Before he suffered his first apostles to assume the responsibilities of their task, he told them to "tarry at Jerusalem" for their enduement of power. Surely it ought to make us pause to consider. We can never dare to stand in our heaven-appointed place to speak for God, until we have by faith and prayer sought the presence and power of him who divides to every man as he will. We are told that the Spirit of the Lord "clothed himself with Gideon," and certain men were said to be "full of faith and of the Holy Spirit." We are not surprised when it is said that "the people could not resist the spirit by which" these men spoke.

There is such a thing as the divine Spirit enveloping the personality of the preacher and giving fitness and application to his message. If the preacher opens his heart in secret for that which he is to proclaim upon the housetops, he need not be dismayed. He will find him-

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self possessed with a strange self-restraint, a spiritual intensity, an inexpressible emotion, a heart oratory, that can only come to the human spirit in cooperation with the divine Spirit. To speak thus conscious of God and the Unseen, is the acme of the preacher's joy.

If the Holy Spirit is related to the gospel preacher and his work, then *we must use his method in the presentation of our message*. That model preacher said: "My speech and my preaching was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Though he had Greek and Hebrew culture, this man resisted the subtle temptation to corrupt the wisdom of God with the puny show of secular learning.

The snare to make a show of learning and robe spiritual truth in the enticing words of worldly wisdom, has caught many of God's preachers. There is preaching that lacks simplicity, cold and frigid in style, lifting the truth above the average man, making the Cross of Christ of none effect. Some preaching you have heard reminds one of Herbert Spencer's definition of evolution:

"Evolution is a change from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity, to a definite, coherent 'heterogeneity.'"

This reminds me that somebody has said, that "A philosopher is a man who can so speak and write as to keep you guessing whether he is a genius or a lunatic." Let all such arid, frigid style be left to scientific guessers, and let him who knows the world's aching heart, speak to it in a language like that our mothers counseled us with, a language that has light and fragrance and heart in it. The sermons that have been masterpieces of

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rhetoric, oratorical gems, have not as a rule been the most fruitful in conversions. Spurgeon and Moody, caring little for rhetoric, turned thousands on two continents to God by their simplicity in holding up the Cross.

Speakest thou for God? Speak well,
Nor slight the mission of the King;
Spare no eloquence to tell
The vital message which you bring.

Speakest thou unto a race condemned,
The truth of sin and hell,
Of Christ, and God and saving grace?
O man of God, speak well!

Know the world's great aching heart,
Know thy God, and near him dwell;
God and dying men are apart!
Ambassador for Christ, speak well!

IV

Once more, it follows from the relation between the gospel preacher and the Holy Spirit, that *God's preacher is and ought to be the mightiest moral force in the world*. This God-called preacher has been identified with every great movement for the advancement of mankind. No man has gone ahead of him in shaping history and turning the thought and life of nations into new and better channels. Yale, and Harvard, and Princeton, and Brown, and Baylor, and all the rest could have had no existence without this man. Our country's great system of education owes more to him than to any living or dead.

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This man has been the inspiration behind every reform. With ceaseless vigilance he has guarded American liberty, and it was through his efforts that the amendment to our Constitution granting religious liberty was secured. It was his voice that was first raised against slavery, denying the state the right to traffic in human flesh. It was his voice that was first raised against the Louisiana Lottery, that most gigantic gambling institution that ever fastened itself upon civilization, and drove it from our borders. It was his voice that was first raised against the traffic of our government in liquor damnation, making a righteous public sentiment that has written its doom.

There are some people who, having evil designs on this country, want to relegate this man to a back seat. They reason that forsooth, because he is in a holy calling, and the institution he represents is divorced from the state, and the house he does business in is, on account of its moral benefit to the state, exempt from taxation, therefore, this man must be denied the common rights of citizenship in the community where he lives.

If this man dares to preach against public sins, and call men to judgment for being in league with them, the powers of evil at once turn pious and admonish him to "preach the gospel." They reason as if the gospel were a set of rules very remote from this life, and which will not become operative until we reach the next world. Lord Melbourne, returning from church one day in a rage of madness, exclaimed: "That preacher, that preacher; why doesn't he preach the gospel? Why, he actually insisted on applying religion to one's private life." Doctor Lorimer said once: "As long as I have

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contented myself with vaporish and feathery generalities, and with fluffy sentimentality, I have been let alone; but whenever I have advocated specific measures of reform, I have been treated as erratic and crazy, and admonished to ‘preach the gospel! ’ ’

Such specious reasoning will never receive the serious attention of right-thinking people. These will endorse the verdict of faithful history concerning this man. That verdict is, that no civilization has ever flourished without him; no reform has ever succeeded without his help; no wrong was ever uprooted without his cooperation. His voice has been raised in behalf of every good cause, and his hand has been extended to help every worthy enterprise.

When Dr. B. M. Palmer died in New Orleans, after standing as a sentinel of righteousness in that wicked city for fifty years, every street-car stopped and every legitimate business was suspended for five minutes. When Dr. John A. Broadus died in Louisville, the leading daily of that city said in great letters in headlines on its front page, “Our First Citizen Is Dead! ”

Thank God for the high tribute the world yet pays the gospel preacher! If he be faithful, he is still earth’s first man, the mightiest conservator of good, and the most potent moral force in a world that needs to be redeemed.

XIV

“THE FIFTH GOSPEL,” OR THE CATACOMBS IN ROME

In connection with a trip to the Baptist World Alliance in Stockholm in 1923, I traveled extensively over Continental Europe. In all my travels, no place interested me as did Rome.

Rome, “The City on Seven Hills,” situated on the banks of the Tiber, is the heart of European history. More currents of history that are of vital interest to the Anglo-Saxon race head up in Rome than any other place in the world.

The history of human freedom and human discipline, the two essential factors in every scheme of government, has been worked out for the whole world from this center. To be sure Rome got her lessons of liberty from Greece, and she learned from the sad fate of that nation that when liberty degenerates into license, the people that foster it are doomed.

But Rome fared no better, for there came a time when her discipline degenerated into tyranny, and with this the Roman empire came to an end. The eternal secret of all national prosperity lies in creating a happy equilibrium between these two things.

There is so much in Rome that is absorbingly interesting, that I cannot trust myself to speak at length of more than one phase of the subject. To me, one of the chief attractions of the historic city was the Catacombs. They

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tell a graphic and thrilling story of more than two hundred and fifty years of heroic struggle for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

The catacombs have been aptly called “The Fifth Gospel,” for they take Christianity in its infancy, almost, and tide it over that early period that is so full of religious controversy and historical inaccuracy.

I

It happened that in A. D. 64 Nero found himself accused of burning Rome in order to make room for a more magnificent palace on the Palatine Hill. Lawyers say that arson is a difficult charge to prove; at least it was so in this case, as the evidence against him was rejected as insufficient, and the offense was shifted to the Christians in Rome, already vehemently hated by both pagans and Jews.

Growing out of this, there broke upon the world a long campaign of religious persecution that finds no parallel except in the papal persecutions of the middle centuries. It was under this persecution that both Paul and Peter suffered martyrdom.

Somehow their dreadful sufferings created some compassion for the Christians, and they grew in numbers and influence, but their suffering was unabated. Public calamities, like the overflow of the Tiber and its consequent famine and disease, were attributed to neglect of veneration for the gods caused by the spread of Christian sentiment. The Christians were held responsible and were punished. This went on until the edict of Constantine, in A. D. 325, when although the pagans

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were still in the majority, there began an era of tolerance. It was during this period that Christians under the guise of "burial clubs" had most of their burial rites and their religious observances under the ground. Denied the right of burial in pagan cemeteries, they practically wrote their religious history in these underground galleries.

I will, as near as I can, describe the one that I explored. You enter the descending stairway from the inside of an old church that is built over the entrance to the galleries. You will understand that the surface of the earth in and around Rome is underlaid with a tufa stone, formed, it is claimed, from volcanic upheavals of ashes and lava in prehistoric times. Excavations into this stone are perfectly secure, and for the most part dry and comfortable.

You go down the flight of steps twenty-five, thirty, occasionally forty feet, and then the gallery begins. The passage may be straight or curving. In width, it will be from three to five feet; in height, eight feet. Usually a party of people will walk single file, each carrying a lighted candle. On either side of you will be niches or graves cut into the walls seven or eight feet in length, and of depth for a human body. These will be one above another, until there are four or five stories of these niches. So you continue your journey, following a guide, until you come to an exit, which may be a quarter, a half, or sometimes, I am told, a mile or more away.

Occasionally you find a small chapel, where undoubtedly religious services, both for the living and the dead, were held. Several baptisteries have been found in the catacombs, and in every case they were arranged for

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immersion. Dr. D. G. Whittinghill, president of our Seminary in Rome, is my authority for saying that there is no evidence in the catacombs for either sprinkling or infant baptism.

Now, the astounding thing about my story is the enormous proportions of the catacombs. It is claimed by careful explorers that if all the galleries of the more than fifty underground cemeteries within a radius of three miles from the center of the city could be placed in a straight line, the line would reach 600 miles, or the entire length of Italy. It is also claimed on the best authority that during the two hundred and fifty years of bitter persecution that drove Christians to this necessity, 2,000,000 to 7,000,000 Christians slept the sleep of death in these tombs. Authorities differ as to the number. I would be disposed to divide the difference, and say 5,000,000.

What a testimony! Think of it: People to the number of nearly as many as live in Texas today thus sealing their faith in death! No man can walk through these silent halls of the heroic dead, without devoutly thanking God for those whose fortitude would accept no deliverance from their enemies, that we might have a better day. The only words I know that will adequately describe them are found in Hebrews 11 : 35-40:

Others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves,

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and holes in the earth. And these all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Yes, Paul describes them well, if indeed he is the writer. I have always had admiration for these early disciples of my Lord, but my admiration has now become exalted until it is awe instead. The world will never know the extent of its debt to these suffering saints.

II

I will turn now and tell you of two or three lessons that I learned from the catacombs.

1. I learned first the lesson of the *virile character of early Christianity*. A people who could attack and break the solidarity of pagan civilization, overcome the hostility and hatred of the Jews, and within the space of two centuries win many millions to a faith that offered them nothing in life but pain and death, were no ordinary people. They were unquestionably allied with the Holy One and companied mightily with the Unseen.

That sixteenth chapter of Romans has a new meaning for me now. I used to wonder what that long list of unpronounceable names was there for; but I understand now. It is Paul's greetings to his brothers and sisters in Christ of a composite character. It shows that Christianity in those early days swept the whole gamut of social, and national, and industrial and intellectual life; and that Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, rich and poor, bond and free, were all swept into the King-

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dom under the irresistible power of this early Christian ministry.

And not only so, but that virile type of Christianity took that mongrel group made up of the social extremes of the earth and knitted them together in fellowship and interlaced their hearts in love, until a heathen world was astounded at their unity.

On the marble slabs closing the graves in the catacombs are written the names of Roman senators and Roman slaves; of men of letters and men without learning; of families of plenty and families of penury. Certainly in those days all lines of distinction were overswept by the tidal wave of brotherhood in Christ Jesus.

I shall always be more democratic in my feelings and in my social and spiritual affinities, because of my visit to the catacombs. The catacombs tell the story of a Christianity well-nigh as virile in type as that which burns like a flame in the Acts of the Apostles.

2. In the second place, I learned the lesson of *the simplicity of early Christianity*. I do not mean to be unkind, but comparison is inevitable here. There is a type of Christianity above the ground in Rome today that is as unlike that which was under the ground as darkness is unlike light. Gorgeous, grasping, extravagant, intolerant, ornate, worldly ambitious; with a record of cruelty behind it that is only matched by pagan idolatry—these are the earmarks of the Christianity that dominates Rome today.

The Christianity that left its history in the catacombs was simple; simple as that which is written in the New Testament. There were no burning candles at an altar,

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or before the image of a Madonna ; there were no torches carried in funeral processions ; there is no evidence of a basin of holy water ever being placed at the entrance of a chapel ; there was no pope's toe to kiss, no incense to burn, and no censer to swing before an image ; there were no trap-doors where auricular confessions were made to a priest. The Christianity of the catacombs was gloriously simple.

All the signs and epitaphs, and inscriptions that are written on their tombs are simple. All the traces that are left of their worship are simple. Everything they did, as far as testimony is left of them, even to the practise of the ordinances, was free from complication.

Rome is arrogant in her claims. She boasts of a historical connection that runs back to Peter, and has set up his marble bust in St. Paul's as that of the first pope. But this is the twentieth century, and people are not so easily fooled. Peter is not more unlike the present pope than the Christianity of the catacombs is unlike the complicated and ornate thing called by that name in the decadent city on the Tiber. Rome's claim to apostolic succession is lost in the catacombs.

Practically the only signs written in the catacombs are the simple signs that were meaningless to any but Christians. The sign of the fish, which was the secret sign of a Christian ; and when found on a tomb, it meant that "A Christian lies here." The sign of the bird, which was the secret sign for the soul ; and when the picture of a bird in a garden was inscribed on a tomb, it means that the soul of that one rests in paradise. A bird with a palm-leaf meant triumph, victory. And this was the extent of their peculiar imagery. They pictured Bible

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scenes, both from the Old and New Testaments, but these always carried their own symbolic meaning.

3. I learned also, that the basis of the wonderful fortitude in suffering of these early Christians was *their firm and unshaken belief in a future life.*

It was interesting to note the difference in epitaphs inscribed on pagan and on Christian tombs. On pagan tombs such as these are found:

A widow to her husband:

Oh, infernal gods, do be kind to him, and let him appear to me in the silent hours of the night.

A freedman to his brother freedman:

Erected to the memory of Memmius Clarus, by his coservant Memmius Urbanus. . . I swear to the gods of heaven and hell that we worked faithfully and lovingly together, and that we were set free from servitude on the same day and in the same house. Nothing could ever separate us except this fatal hour.

In these there is hardly the “shadow” of belief in a future life, and the heart is chilled with despair. The Christian epitaphs run like these:

Antonia, sweet soul, rest in peace. May God refresh!

Prima, mayest thou live in the glory of God, and in the peace of our Lord.

Prudentius, in extolling the Christian dead, said:

Soon the time will come when heat shall revive these bones, when blood shall gush anew in these veins, when life shall resume this abode which it has left. These bodies, long inert, which lay in the dust of tombs, shall spring upward once again to join their former souls.

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Earth, receive and keep in thy maternal breast this mortal spoil which we confide to thee; it was the dwelling of a soul created by the Author of all things; 'twas here a spirit lived, quickened by the wisdom of Christ. Cover this body which we place within thy breast. One day, he who created it and fashioned it with his hands, will ask thee for his work again.

This was written in the dim light of the remote past, but it reveals a hope in a blessed immortality that shames our sensual and material age. It is not uncommon to see inscribed in the catacombs a picture of Jonah and the whale, referring to the resurrection. Another common one is Daniel among the lions, prophetic of the final deliverance of Christians from their sufferings. It is evident from all we see there that the thoughts of these early Christians were directed constantly to the resurrection and a future life. They literally conquered paganism by the hope of heaven.

It was this hope that gave them their marvelous fortitude in suffering. Teach a man that life here is not all; that he is responsible to God, the Judge of all men, for his every thought and act; that there is to be a judgment-day when all the inequalities of time will be made right; that a life of faith and obedience issues into an eternity of blessedness and reward; that death is but the door to this larger life—and when these become his convictions, he can endure.

During those terrible days of the Neronian persecution, Christians were martyred and in their actual death made to furnish dramatic conceptions of the death scenes of legend and mythology. They would be tied, and have their hands burned off. They would be wrapped in the skins of wild beasts, and torn to pieces by dogs. They

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would be tied and bound to the horns of a bull. Their bodies would be saturated with oil and lighted to make tableaux for a mocking crowd, or to furnish light for the chariot-races in the Roman stadium.

Nero prided himself on his dramatic ability, and his genius left nothing undone to impart to his persecutions all of the dramatic elements that would magnify the hate of pagan idolatry, and give stage effect to his perfidy. Seneca, the senator, who was present when much of this was going on, writing a letter to a friend who was painfully afflicted and trying to console him, said:

“ What are your sufferings compared with the flame and the rack of these Christians? And yet, in the midst of sufferings of that sort, I have seen them not only not groan, that is little; not only not complain, that is little; not only not reply, that too is little; but I have seen them smile, and smile with a good heart.”

III

In the presence of the catacombs and their story of suffering, I asked myself the question, Where did these people get such a virile type of Christianity as would enable them to walk amid flames unafraid? And I found the answer. They got their Christianity from Paul, and you and I know what was the burden of his gospel message. It was the resurrection, the *resurrection!* THE RESURRECTION! He based all upon it. He never got away from it. It meant to him, not a dead, but a living Christ walking again in the midst of his people.

The people who found their burial-places in these ancient crypts took this Pauline gospel of life after

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death and pressed it to their hearts; and with it, they welcomed the pain and the torture of their haters that marked their passage through fire from earth to glory. It was the trumpet with which they greeted death and the grave, and with this trumpet to their lips they cried: “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

It is one of the most solemn convictions of my heart that in these last days we are losing our hold on this mighty gospel of life after death. Ours is a humanitarian age, and our sense of the hereafter is growing feebler and feeblower in the intensity of our desire to improve what is here.

We are afraid of growing “other-worldly,” for this world seems to have a disdain for such people. But I remind you that while Paul, the matchless resurrection preacher, had a hundred hands to lend in a ministry of helpfulness and healing to mankind, he was Argus-eyed and reveled in visions of the other world. No man can ever be worth very much to this world who isn’t quite sure of the next. Our sorrows are too much unrelieved. We walk too much in pensiveness and doubt. The note of joy and triumph is entirely too much absent from our speech. If we would be at our best, we must regard the grave, not as an impassable barrier, but an open door to blessed peace, realized desire, fulness of glorious opportunity, endless day.

When Margaret Ogilvy lay dying, she called for her Bible and opened it at the fourteenth chapter of John. When she discovered that her sight was too far gone for her to read, she drew the Book slowly to her lips and softly kissed the page on which the chapter was written;

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and as she did so, she said to her son, J. M. Barrie,
“ Will that do ? ”

Yes; that will do. It is the saint’s everlasting anchor.

Our knowledge of that life is small,
The eye of faith is dim;
But 'tis enough that he knows all,
And I shall be with him.

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